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ABSTRACT

This publication seeks to examine the problems and practical concerns related to the organization and operation of an effective community college placement program. Using presentations given in workshops, basic information in four critical areas of placement activities in the community college is provided. First, a presentation by B. Keith Duffin deals with the philosophy and assumptions which underlie a successful placement operation. Second, Glenn A. Adams deals with the development of a student's resume and its use in the placement process. Additionally, materials developed by workshop participants are included as samples of ways of handling induction activities, processing employer requests, and circulating opportunities to both faculty and students. Third, Richard Jennings provides concrete information as to how placement directors can organize programs of public relations and advertising of both the college and placement services. Finally, James K. Morishima shares suggestions relative to conducting followup studies and evaluations of placement operations. (Author)

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PROCEEDINGS: CAREER PLACEMENT WORKSHOP

"ORGANIZATION, OPERATION, AND EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE PLACEMENT PROGRAMS"

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INTRODUCTION:

Community college students, it has been suggested, have an entrepreneural view toward higher education, seeing it as a risk of their time and resources against the probability of greater material gain for them if they complete a specific program of training. Their approach to education is essentially pragmatic, and they are willing to undertake the required risk of courses and experiences provided the training programs appear relevant to their target of employment.

Typically much effort is expended by those responsible for community college teaching and leadership to ensure that this high need for visible relevance is met. Extensive curriculum guides spell out sequences of experiences and many faculty emphasize the essential relationship between what they teach and actual job performance. Additionally, community college counselors spend much of their professional effort in career guidance activities, seeking to help individual students move toward career selection and commitment.

Despite all this effort to meet the entrepreneural needs of the community college student, one of the most critical decision points in the community college student's developmental sequence has been seriously ignored. Until recently, little resource or effort has been expended in assisting the community college student at exit from his educational experiences or training program. Generally, community colleges have not helped the student with the critical question of which job with which company, and its correlative questions relating to potential career ladders, special benefits, and the advantages of working for one company as contrasted with another. An effective placement function constitutes the

capstone of the entrepreneural effort by the student and the training efforts by the faculty. How well it is done will determine the economic and social success of the student, and will, in large measure, govern the value he places upon his community college experiences as contributing to his current employment success.

Contributing to increased interest in community college placement is the national concern on evaluating educational outcomes. Evaluation of educational outcomes requires attention to those portions of the community college which interface with the community. Placement, with its potential for contacting employers and for conducting follow-up studies of former students, has come to prominence as one of the important points of interface for evaluation of college programs.

In response to this newly aroused recognition of the potential role of placement programs both for the student and for the college, the Center for the Development of Community College Education, University of Washington, has undertaken a series of inservice training projects to provide community college personnel with the requisite skills and knowledge necessary to conduct a placement program which is consonant with the unique characteristics and needs of the community college. This paper, along with several others, represents one tangible outcome of that effort. As one of several papers addressing the placement functions of the community college, this paper seeks to examine the problems and practical concerns related to the organization and operation of an effective placement program. Using presentations given in workshops sponsored by the Center, the editors seek to provide the reader with basic information in four critical areas of placement activities. First, a presentation by R. Keith Duffin,

Director of Personnel Services, Brigham Young University, deals with the philosophy and assumptions which underlie a successful placement operation. Second, Glenn A. Adams, Director of Counseling, Everett Community College, deals with the development of a student's resume and its use in the placement process. Additionally, materials developed by workshop participants are included as samples of ways of handling induction activities, processing employer requests, and circularizing opportunities to both faculty and students. Third, Richard Jennings, President, Evans and Associates, Seattle, provides concrete information as to how placement directors can organize programs of public relations and advertising of both the college and placement services. Finally, James K. Morishima, Director of Institutional Research, University of Washington, shares suggestions relative to conducting follow-up studies and evaluations of placement operations. Additionally, a sample follow-up questionnaire developed by workshop participants details practical answers to the questions raised by any effort to conduct follow-up studies in the community college.

The Editors.

"PRINCIPLES OF CAREER PLACEMENT"

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PRINCIPLES OF CAREER PLACEMENT

My assignment, in this presentation, is to present some "ideal" for the organization and management of placement services. I would like to emphasize the importance of developing "ideal" concepts toward which we can strive. Unfortunately, many of us set "low" program goals which can be easily attained. Their easy attainment prevents significant program development. It is necessary to have a nice blend of the ideal with the real. At the same time that we set high standards of program excellence, we must deal with actual, mundane, daily problems and real people, so we must constantly focus upon the practical, in my opinion, in our placement work.

Do you ever sit back and ask yourself, "What is it that I'm doing in this placement game?" Are you simply helping students find jobs? That's great. You know I always thought, "That's better than doing nothing, to help someone find a job, because a lot of people have difficulty even finding jobs." But simply to help people find jobs would be, in my opinion, to aim low in our placement responsibilities. E. W. Steele of the 3-M Company said recently in an article, "Placement as we know it today will be dead and buried by 1984." Now in one sense, I think that's unfortunate, for a different reason, I think, than you might suspect. I think placement as we know it today, in a lot of schools, ought to be dead and buried now, because a lot of people are doing placement so poorly. It actually can be a disservice to a student to help him find a job if you help him find something of the wrong kind for him, and if by starting in it and being in it for a time he fails to develop his confidence. If he fails to grow, if he fails to move toward something that has lifetime meaning for him, then he will have been poorly served. I fear there are

a lot of people in placement who are so geared as to be simply helping people find jobs, and who consequently may be serving them ill, rather than well. It is unfortunate that some placement people don't really try, in addition to helping people find jobs, to help them launch careers, to help them find career pathways, to help them enter beginning situations in which they can grow and develop with respect to people like this. To paraphrase Steele, placement as we know it today certainly ought to be dead, it ought to be buried.

The Puget Sound Region has recently entered into a new activity, the Regional Placement Office, that is aimed at finding job openings. It is important to use this new placement service carefully, so that it merely becomes another tool available to the student looking for a career launching, rather than to use it to help students become employed so that you can provide fine statistics to your administration, and then relax, feeling that you've done a good job of placement. My objective in making this statement is to underlay moving into the mechanics of a placement service with some of the philosophy which is requisite if you hope to develop excellence in placement rather than become mere mechanical practitioners. I interviewed a student the other day for possible employment at the university. I said, "Tell me about your background, some of your employment experiences, some of the activity you've been involved with in connection with those," and the student said, "Well, I was, back in 1963 I was in....." He reached and fumbled and struggled, and really had a terrible time telling me his own employment background. It was evidence to me of the kind of thing that happens with a lot of our students as they go out to present themselves in the employment market. They fumble, they are unprepared, and they impress people much less well than they ought to, so they get much less result than

they ought to. Someone has failed in his placement job with this person, because he should have been prepared to unfold this background to me effectively. I don't mean he would have a nice little presentation all set up so he would reel it off in a canned fashion, but he ought to go having his facts nicely in mind, so that he can call them forth as the situation requires. One of the jobs, then, that you have in your placement work, is to help this type of person become prepared to help himself. The number of job listings that you people have to present to your students is miniscule in number compared to all those job openings out there, and if the student is prepared to help himself, then he can not only follow the listings that you give him, but he can pursue other offerings and present himself with advantage. I mention that because it is simply an indication of the kind of inadequacy that occurs if we're handling our jobs as if we're employment agencies rather than placement offices. On a hot day in Salt Lake City, recently, right in the middle of the business district, one of my heater hoses in my car broke, and all of the water and anti-freeze spilled out, and of course I couldn't go anywhere with the car, and I couldn't see, looking under the hood, just where the leak was, so I had to get a tow truck to come and tow my car to where we could really work on it. I jumped in the tow truck with the fellow who was driving it, and found out that he was a college graduate in art, and hadn't been able to find anything in his field, and so he was driving a tow truck. I asked him if he'd been mechanically prepared and inclined, and he said he didn't know the least thing about mechanics, but he did know how to drive a truck. As we rode toward the place where the car was going to be serviced, he told me about the placement office in the school where he had graduated, (and I was pleased to find out it wasn't ours). No one had really convinced him that

to a great extent he could get what he wanted if he would go after it in certain ways. So he was prepared to do one thing, frustrated and chafing, doing something else, but he had to get bread and butter on the table. I suppose that the school that he graduated from could actually claim him as a placement, because when they take their survey, they would find him employed, and so probably presented him to their administration as one of those that was successfully employed. But actually, in his own mind, he was completely unhappy, completely frustrated, and while a fine statistic for the placement office, there was no good statistic from his viewpoint.

This then is symptomatic or indicative of the kind of disservice that can occur in a job-oriented placement program even though the statistics can seem to indicate success. To me, the whole aim or thrust of education (and subsequently placement services) is to cause something to happen to people. I suppose this man driving his truck might have been able to appreciate many of the cultural and valued things in his time off, having been educated, that he couldn't have appreciated otherwise. But I think that's <u>not</u> what his education was supposed to have accomplished for him. We're in a critical, sensitive place as placement people. We must help people as they complete their education to take their college experiences out into the work world and have it really as relevant and useful as hoped and envisioned by them when they began their schooling. We must not get involved in the numbers game and help people merely to become employed. We must become alert to the distinct possibility that the quality of our services can be desperately bad. We should not abdicate our responsibility and place people as though they were things. People should not be moved

around like pawns, or like groceries on a shelf. Disraeli said something which I think is appropriate. He said, "There are three kinds of lies; big lies, little lies, and statistics." I read the statistics that the placement offices pump out, and I always wonder, as I read them, about the quality of the thing that went on behind those statistics. Some offices claim 85, 90, 95% placement of their people on graduation day. I wonder how many of their students have gotten into jobs which are going to help them grow and move on into satisfactory careers.

As we examine the principles of placement in preparation to establishing our own institutional programs, there are some specific points about placement which are fundamental: 1. The philosophy of placement. I think you should mark down as a fundamental thé idea that career development isn't something that happens at a point in time. I see people look for work and I see placement officers placing people as though, "If you look for a job and you get a job, now you've achieved it"--as though the placement is an end. Keep in mind that a student's first job is a beginning, it's not an end. When you find that first job, or when the student finds that first job, then he's got to now live the rest of his life starting from that position. Unfortunately I have witnessed many placement officers walking around, with their chests puffed up, talking about their great placements. We simply can't tell whether one job which we thought was an end was anything worthwhile until the student is a few years down the employment pike. Growth in an initial job is often more important than our placement efforts. I've seen people passed over who were in just the right position to have a nice opportunity because they hadn't grown--they weren't ready for the next level of responsibility.

I've seen people at remarkably young ages be plucked for something extremely important because there had been so much challenge in their initial opportunities, they'd grown so much, and demonstrated enough ability, that they were ready early to take the next step up the ladder. Placement happens over a lifetime, and at each new level or plateau one must be ready if he's to have all of the advantage that he or she deserves.

2. I think the second thing that you ought to make very firm as part of your philosophy is that students have to make their own decisions. We talk about placing people: we not only don't place, we don't have the right to place people. Again, many placement officers talk like a grocer. We say we're going to put the macaroni over here, and we're going to put the mushrooms here, and the peas over here, and so forth. We must help people know as much as possible about the job market; we must help them become as proficient as possible in presenting themselves to employers--help them see the need and desirability of early growth; we must help them understand the kinds of knowledge and skills that they ought to become equipped with; but then they and the employers they deal with will make the placement decisions and they're going to have to make the recurrent decisions along the way. One of the responsibilities we have to people, after we realize that we cannot make their decisions, is to help them realize that they must guide their own lives. There's a tendency for young people to want someone else to make the decisions for them. I think it's natural that they would want this. However, if they don't become equipped to make a sensible decision for themselves, they will have great difficulty assessing what a given position has to offer against

what they want, or where it will lead in relation to their career expectations. Incidentally, one of the things I think you ought to do in connection with this is to not always just look at the beginning jobs, but take the beginning jobs that you're helping students find most often, and see where the students are ten years, fifteen years, and twenty years out of your training program. This will help you to determine, among all of the alternative opportunities you're finding students as employment beginnings, which ones have most often led to begger and better things, or which ones have your graduates essentially doing the same things twenty years later as they were when they started. It will help you to find out among all of these alternatives which are the really good opportunities. Someone has said that a man will remain a rag picker as long as he has only the vision of a rag picker. There is a marked danger in community college placement in the often expressed assumption that there's not as much growth opportunity in the positions the two year people can qualify for as against what college graduates might find in life. If we can just get this welder a job so he can be a welder all his life, or this secretary, so that she can be a secretary, we've done an adequate job, when the fact is that if people are really excellent, potentially anyone can make it to the top, and if we will not let people become convinced that because they have a two-year terminal education that they can only get so high, if we can get them to lift and elevate their occupational aspirations, then they won't remain just rag-pickers. Surprising numbers of secretaries become executives and professionals of various kinds. So also will people from a surprising number of the fields we might tend to think are terminal. One of the things that should underlie your placement program philosophy is this idea that I've

been alluding to, that a major part of your role is to help students help themselves.

There's such a strong feeling in placement to feel that our job is to get a lot of listings and dangle them before the students, with the expectancy that these constitute the alternatives to becoming employed. Actually, we should convince our students that, to a degree we might not expect, they can call their employment shot. To a surprising degree they can influence what they'll be, what they get. Also, they can become so skills-equipped that they indeed will attain their goal. These openings that we file become just a small part of all the things we bring to the students to help them in this effort they will make to help themselves have and find successful lives. I see the majority of placement people getting so involved in the mechanics that they are really becoming the placers, not letting the students place themselves. Listings are really rather meaningless--because those employers are all out there, they're all available to our students if we assist them to find where the jobs are and how to get to them, and then help the students acquire the skills necessary to present themselves effectively to the prospective employer. If there doesn't happen to come a listing from XYZ Company, and yet that's what a certain student wants, he can go get it. To illustrate, I had an interesting experience recently. A student wanted to work with IBM so bad that he could taste it--he wanted to get into that field, and he felt that this was the right company. He'd investigated, looked into it, and he was worried about it, because although their personnel officers came to the campus, and over a period of three or four days with five or six interviewers ran a lot of all-day schedules, he knew that not all of the students

that wanted to see them would get on the schedules. Secondly, he was conscious of all those people that would be on the schedule, and he said to me, "Gee, they'll see a hundred and something or two hundred and something people; my chances are awfully poor, when I know among those will be a lot of the best students in the school. My chances are pretty poor that I'm going to be selected." I agreed. I said, "The campus contact is probably the most competitive way you can see a company, because they will see so many students in a short period of time, and they'll see all the bright lights, and that'll make you look less good than if they just see you alone. So why don't you, even though they're coming, why don't you cultivate them alone and ahead of time?" So he made an arrangement to go up to Salt Lake and visit with the man in charge of that office, and present to him his concern and interest and desire. He prepared himself to present himself well, and he made a good enough impression that they made him an offer of employment, and when IBM came down to campus, he just sat back and watched the two hundred fuss and compete and worry and so forth. He was so determined that, deciding to call his shot, he did; he saw them alone, and he didn't have to see them in that most competitive circumstance. To a large degree, this happens whenever you get a job listing. If a company gets to the point of listing a job somewhere, that means that when the opening first occurred, they didn't think right off of someone they wanted, or they didn't have available in their prosepctive employee file someone identified as a good candidate. Their personnel search requires that the position be listed somewhere to see if they can get some qualified applicants. A very active listing begets a lot of applicants, whether it's advertised through one of your college offices or through your regional placement center. When it's

listed there is going to be an inflow of applicants--hence the competition for the position is more intense. If a person is out pursuing companies on his own, he may get to a lot of places, and be the only man seeing them today--in some cases the only man seeing them in this particular week. He has an opportunity to see them in a less competitive circumstance. I don't want to over-emphasize the importance of individual search, but if a man is going to call his career shot by doing the special thing, and doing it especially well, and at a special time, he gets himself in contact with employers in a less competitive circumstance. Now I'm not suggesting he shouldn't pursue listings when he sees them or have interviews in the placement office--these will supplement the efforts he makes on his own. But if you're really helping students help themselves, you're going to help each student become prepared to take rifle aim at what he wants, and then go out and spend his energy working with those places that are most likely to provide what he wants. It's always been strange to me to see a student undertake schooling wanting a specific career experience, and then spend a lot of time interviewing a group of employers simply because they happen to come to the office, or happen to send in listings, when all the time he could individually cultivate contacts dealing with his special interests. It takes a coincidence, a nice coincidence, for a person to contact a company of special interest to them and be rebuffed with the answer, "No, we have nothing." These students return, and I've had them say to me, "I wanted to go with XYZ Company, but I contacted them, and they don't have anything," so they kind of cross that prosepct off the list, and pursue other places. Continually I've emphasized, "If a position with XYZ is what you really want, why don't you call back, cultivate the contact, and let them

know that this is what you want? Continue to watch over a period of time, because it doesn't take nearly so much coincidence to have the occurrence of an opening over a period of time." We had, as a good example of this, a group interview one day with the California Packing Corporation (which is now called the Del Monte Corporation). There was one man, an accountant, who for a particular reason especially wanted that company. He had an interview with them--they didn't make him an offer--he was very discouraged and disappointed, because he wanted the program they had, but had started to look for other things because they didn't make him an offer. He came in one day and had an offer, and it wasn't what he really wanted, but he said, "It's the only thing I've gotten, so should I take it?" I said, "Well, what is it you really want?" and he told me of this program that California Packing had, and I said, "For heaven's sakes don't take this until you go back and let them know how much you want that program, and see if there's a chance over a period of time that something would develop that would let you in." I think it was less than a week later he came back, and he said, "I'm going to work for California Packing." They were so interested in him when they found out how interested he was in them that whatever prior evaluation they had made, it was elevated, and wherever their cut-off point was, it pulled him past. Now these are the kinds of things that operate when we say students can call their shots, and when we talk about you helping students help themselves. You can engage mechanically in getting a lot of jobs, and seeing people become employed in things they don't want, or you can help prepare them to take rifle-aim at and get the things that will lead toward the careers, or at least most likely lead toward the careers that individuals want. The difference in your

accomplishment and in what happens in people's lives will be so markedly better that you'll be much more satisfied. Secondly, I think you'll find a surprising amount of employment spin-off resulting as you place people with companies who really want that company. They'll perform better because they're motivated, and this will help your school achieve a good reputation with those employers. They will think favorably of your program because they'll say, "We always have such good results from the people who come from this school." A lot of it will be the factor of motivation of the student, but it makes the employer seek your door again because the result has been so good. And so the thing builds on itself, and amplifies and increases your ability to help.

I think that another thing that must underlie quality placement is to be really service-oriented, people-oriented. I've alluded to this to a degree, but we become so inclined to become mechanical, we get busy, we have insufficient budget, too little space and too little staff, and so we handle the traffic, and then we miss out on being able to do the quality thing that is really the only worthwhile placement. Someone has said that if we're not careful we're too busy learning the tricks of the trade to learn the trade. I see a lot of placement people involved, super-involved with gimmicks. I've mentioned this before--working on making this or that film--which sometimes is an excellent film, but they get so consumed with it, they use half a year of limited time that they have preparing a film which only hits nicely a few people, and still doesn't get at helping persons with their individual, separate, problems. Some placement officers always talk at the general level about what people are like, but no one individual fits the generalization. We need to focus upon helping

people with their individual, special differences. I think if you're really service-oriented and individual-oriented you'll devise ways to save time so that you can work with people's individual differences. We had to come to that at BYU, because we grew from a school with 4000 students, day-time students, to one with 25,000 in a fairly short time, and while the school was growing like this, the placement staff was growing just at a very moderate rate of incline. So where we initially interviewed students individually, we had to come to interview students in groups. Still, this worked well for us. By grouping people according to programs and interests we could impart some of the kinds of things that you can tell people in groups. We saved enough time that we could afterward make ourselves available to any individual on a one-to-one basis as he had need to work with his individual and separate problems. If we had kept on giving all of this information on a one-to-one basis, and repeating that part which could be given in a group situation, then we would have indulged in using our time in a way that would have been wasteful, and that would have disallowed us the chance for the later one-to-one confrontation with the individual and his special problems. I mention that because there are a lot of ways that you can find if you look hard enough to save the time that you'll need to have in order to work with students one-to-one. We even had, in our early days, a certain form that we typed up for the students; it's surprising what a discovery we thought we'd made when we realized the students could type that up for themselves--it saved us a lot of time. You may have some things you're doing like that that are so obvious to others, but because you've been doing it so long, it doesn't occur to you that if you can find the things of that kind, and do them differently, you may have

a lot more time than you think.

These are just a few points which I would hope you would have at the base of your placement program which, with other kinds of things--the mechanics and so forth--make your placement service excellent. Now let me just get into a list of some purposes or objectives in placement: Number 1: Assist Students to Determine Career Objective or Direction. One of the real serious problems students have if they're going to be well placed is they often don't know what they want. If a student doesn't know what he wants, then how does he know how to start looking? That kind of person is probably just going to have to become employed, and if he's lucky, to become employed in something he likes. He may end up really with an enjoyable, successful career, but the percentage that would have that kind of good fortune would likely be pretty small. If a student really ought to be in accounting or would like what accounting produces, but doesn't know it, or if he is an accountant, and would prefer auditing, or would really dislike that and like something else better, he should have some way of finding out what these people are doing not only at the beginning, but also after ten, fifteen, twenty or so forth years in this position, to determine if that is something that would be appealing to him. A lot of students, for instance in accounting, try auditing, and find that they really don't like it. A lot of accounting firms have said to me, "That won't hurt students. They could all start in auditing, and if they find they don't like it, then we'll place them with our customers, and they'll be better off anyway." It's been my observation that a lot of them get in there and find they don't like it, and because they don't like it they're not motivated, because they're not motivated they don't do well, and therefore the things that their employers

can say about them are not good. In trying to place them with other employers, they have to say, "Well, this person was only average, or this isn't one of our bright lights." The students' ability to move into what they want, and do it successfully, is often impaired and what is even more serious, sometimes their own confidence has been crushed because of inappropriate initial placement. By moving into something they didn't want, they didn't succeed initially, and sometimes there's been a real injury to their career. As placement officers we need to become equipped with information that can help students determine what they would like as a career objective. As I say, they need more than beginning information--they need to see how careers develop, and what they look like down the road. Then, if a person looking at all of this has at least pretty good reason to suspect he would like a certain thing when he's forty or fifty, he can try to determine what kinds of things are most likely to lead to that, and he knows right where to go, looking for his career entry. Rather than merely becoming employed, this person is likely to develop a successful career.

Another thing that we need to do is that <u>We Need To Help Them Achieve Their Optimum Career or Their Career Objectives</u>. We can't do this unless we get them into the office. This means we need to inform students of our services, and we need to offer employer contacts, which suggests we need to be active at the business of reaching out to employers. We need to help students prepare themselves to present themselves well. We need to analyze and watch market trends. What has happened recently in teacher placement, which caught most placement officers by surprise, can in retrospect be clearly identified with techniques of market research. The indications were

clear as to what was going to happen. Yet many very sophisticated people didn't see that coming, and were caught unprepared. We need to be spending some of our time looking at trends so we don't counsel 2000 students to go into education or some other field when the opportunity is going to be very limited about the time they're ready to graduate. We need to make an effort to have available those facilities and that staff that are needed to do justice to the needs of our students.

The foregoing implies the next principle: We Need To Achieve A Partnership With Administration and Faculty. Part of your responsibility is to deliberately develop a good relationship with your faculty and with your administration. If you don't have adequate facilities, if you don't have an adequate budget, that may be partly a matter of the time and funds available, but if you don't have that rightful proportionate share of the budget available to your institution, that may be because of deficiency on your part in how you have presented your situation or your needs, or the importance of your position to the administration. If what you have in proportion to what is available to your institution is insufficient, there may be a deficiency in your efforts to cultivate your administration. If it is, one of the first things you need to do when you get back home is to begin a deliberate effort to cultivate and impress your administration with the importance of the placement situation and to win a larger share of the available budget dollars, to win a little more opportunity to have space and staff that will enable you to effectively help students. You have a responsibility to deliberately organize the placement office, its policies and procedures, so that you can carry out an excellent program. I have visited, over the years, literally dozens of placement offices, and

I've seen a marked difference in how they're organized. Some of them are just operating, to use the vernacular, by the seat of their pants. They've got a few obvious procedures, but they have not determined their fundamental philosophy or given any order of priority to procedures and processes. Some are not really reaching out and bringing in the students, or when they bring them in, they don't have an adequate program to work on with them. Some are not trying to develop their relationships with the faculty or the administration. Some have no program to reach out to employers, or to follow-up to see how students are making out after they find employment. The sufficiency of the placement libraries is generally--maybe I should say the insufficiency--is generally very apparent. You have an obligation to have an organized and adequate arrangement of procedures, and so forth, so that you can really help these students. I think you have an obligation to the college to help it evaluate itself by receipt of information from alumni and employers. You may have a lot of students engaged in programs that are not likely to lead to jobs, or that will lead to anything meaningful, but who have no way of knowing that, because they may have been recruited to a program by some persuasive faculty member. Sometimes faculty members have so much involved in maintaining their particular field that they will recruit students and imbue them with feelings of great things to come, when in reality the promises are not that good. You have an obligation to the university in relation to that. You need to help the administration evaluate what is available, and what is good to offer, and what is not so good to offer, so that they can keep the curriculum up-to-date. You need to maintain a deliberate program of practical research devoted to the business of

watching the trends, and learning about positions and where they lead, and this kind of thing. This is something that there's a tendency for us as placement people to overlook.

These statements represent a bit of philosophy, and what I think are some of the fundamental objectives that you should have in facing placement. In the remaining few minutes I'd like to fill in these fundamentals by talking a little bit about some of your procedures in the organization of your work. I have talked about relationships. You have several publics that you must deliberately promote: the administration, the faculty, and the students are certainly fundamental, and employers. These four are absolutely essential if you're going to succeed. If you don't get the student, you're beat at the beginning--you're not going to help students if they don't come in. They'll come in if they feel you really are able to give them some useful, meaningful, fundamental help. If you're going to give them a little Mickey Mouse help, you may have difficulty getting them in, but assuming that you are geared up to give them meaningful help, then you should set up procedures and means to advertise to the students the availability of your service. Let them know that you're there, and make sure they get in in time for you to give them meaningful help, before they are out on the job market, and needing to go to work. There are a lot of ways that you can do this. In this initial presentation I'm not going to get into the nuts and bolts, except to suggest that you ought to use a multi-media approach in doing this. There's a tendency, if we're not careful, to put our eggs in one basket: put a notice in the school paper, and that's it, or someone else puts it on the bulletin board, and that's it. Actually, if you're giving talks to

classes, announcements by the professors and department heads, and using the bulletin board, and using the school paper, and sending out letters, and doing it through a variety of means, then the student that doesn't pick it up in this way will pick it up in that. By using a variety of ways you then will maximize the chance that everyone is going to see the announcement that this service is available, and increase the chance that they'll get in.

The same thing really is true in your relationships with your administration. In developing these relationships, you ought to be as sensitive to the administration as you are to each student as you try to place him. The things that you do ought to be geared to win the interest and support of those who are in authority at the time. The things that will win response from one president may not click with the next president. Or the things that helped you with this vice-president may not help with that vice-president. You should be sensitive to those whom you work with in administration, and do those things that will help them in their positions, and help them see the importance of your situation, and do it in the way that will really evoke their response and concern. Your efforts should involve a multi-approach, and with exceeding sensitiveness toward what will succeed with the particular people that you must impress.

Similarly, your contacts with business should relate to whom you have to place. It's one thing to get a big flow of jobs, but if you get that from too many of the employers who are not the ones that your people really need to find their opportunities with, you may delude yourself into thinking you are successful, when for the individual students, as you work with them, you really have little to offer. If you've got a lot of women,

you want certain kinds of opportunities, jobs in which they've got a chance of getting good beginnings and future growth. If you have a large minority group, the same thing applies. If you have a lot of people in business fields, or in technical fields, you should undertake extensive development of relationships with employers that offer the things your students need. Set up to do an ongoing cultivation with these people. Also, I think you ought to be extremely responsive to what they ask of you. For example, when I came home from WW II, people trying to get cars were having a terrible time, and the used car dealers were able to sell any old kind of clunker. Many took advantage of people. They abused people at a time when they had high demand and lots of customers and could have built up a real clientele. I remember commenting at the time how unfortunate that they would misuse this great opportunity to impress a lot of people with their integrity and the service that they could or would give by selling them clunkers for a high price. You can win a certain response or contact from companies once, but if what they get when they come is poor, they may not come back. So, to have them on an ongoing basis, you need to respond quite correctly to what they ask of you. If you do, they'll seek your door. They'll know that when they need something, and they contact your office, that's what they're going to get. You'll be the first one they think of, or among the first, each time they have an opening. If you can establish that kind of reputation, then you're going to build up a relationship that will be lasting, and that will pay off again and again. Placement at your institution will be a building, expanding thing. I had a personal opportunity to watch this work, because when I went to BYU, we had, during my

initial year, seventeen employer visits to the campus. We built from seventeen, even though we're located in a remote place where there aren't many local industries, to where we were having 1400 employer visits during the recruiting year. The number of listings coming through grew from a scant few hundred to many many thousands.

Something I've mentioned to some of you before, which I think is extremely important, is not only do you respond accurately to what they ask, but since placement is competitive, and your interest is in placing your student, why don't you get there first? A good listing is like choice meat--when it gets a little bit old, it's pretty bad. So, don't get your listings and go through some extended process that eventually gets them out to the student. By the time you get them out, and your students get to the employers they find that the job was filled last week. When you get something really good, get it out the same day it comes in: get your students out there ahead of the crowd rather than after the crowd. To the extent you do this with everything you touch, your students will be ahead of the crowd, which, coupled with the quality of their preparation, they're going to get a disproportionate number of the good opportunities. If you're geared up to do things in efficient and speedy ways, then you begin to achieve quality in placement.

In connection with the procedures, I'd just like to briefly say two or three other things, because the time for closing is upon us. See to the development of these relationships. See that you develop them so they will last and endure. This accomplished, you can call on faculty members and they will help you: you can count on administration support; you can count on employers contacting you again and again; and this will underlie

all of the work that you're trying to do. When your students come cold to an employer, when there isn't a listing, they'll accept him with more responsiveness because they've had a nice relationship with you and previous students. In the section on objectives, I talked of the need to have available to students certain kinds of information. I think you should look to the development of your placement library, to have it organized, again, so that you don't just get the half a dozen most obvious books and a few very general brochures, but rather that kind of material that will enable a student to get that which he needs to be individually successful. One student may need a certain array of information that is quite different than another, so you need to get the kinds of books, catalogues, directories, and assisting information that will enable each student to find what he wants, including information on how to develop a resume, how to write a good letter of application, how to present one's self in the interview, how to find XYZ Company, how to identify companies by type or by geography, what kinds of things later on this kind of beginning most often leads to, and on and on. Your effort in building your library is not to put together the appearance of having a repository of information, but to really get that kind of material that will help students individualize their effort. Then, getting it, you should put it on display in such a way that the students can find it easily and use it easily, and know that it's there. This is urgent. I've seen offices that have had the finest collection of up-to-date information, but they don't do very much to make it easy to get at and use. To the extent that you set up your job information library so that students can easily find it and easily use it, you'll multiply the extent to which they use it.

There'll be a lot of activity going on where students are finding what they need and are going out and helping themselves find a good beginning job which you might not have listed directly at this time. Activity in which a student has been involved with another student with whom you may have had an initial interview, and the self-directed student comes in and begins to build a job campaign, goes out and contacts some companies, and gets a job: a lot of it might have occurred because of how well you organized and had available materials that he needed. A good placement library will magnify and multiply your placement effort. I think most of our offices are very deficient in the amount and quality and up-to-dateness of job-related materials.

I won't linger on the quarters and paraphernalia that you have, except to say that the employers coming to the campus are entitled to interviewing rooms that are adequate, so that the situation in which the employer and the candidate talk to each other is optimum. Beyond this, each little thing you do lifts the impression the employer is getting, so that the total impact at the end is high enough to result in success. If you prepare well for each of the employer visits, so the employer comes and finds his schedule ready, nicely prepared, that you've got a place set up for him, and the students come on time, and so forth so that all through the day he has a good attitude toward what is happening, it might cause him to get a little better reading on how your students look. In fact, if you do it well enough, you can almost cast a halo effect. I'm not suggesting that we try to fool employers, but I am suggesting you can do things in such a way as to improve the competitive position in which your students make their contact with employers.

The information that you get from students as they initially register with your office ought to be such that it will enable you afterward to find them when you need them, to provide the information that employers need and ought to have when they ask you about the candidate, and that will enable you to know, if you get a good listing, how to find the people interested in that kind of opportunity. If we're not careful we may get a good listing, and we may act on it today, but we may find the wrong people in competition with those from other schools who sent the right kind of people.

Again, be sure your procedures are set up so that you can do these things smoothly and readily. Don't worry too much in your facilities about the sheer bigness of your quarters, but instead about the extent to which you have what is needed to do the right kind of job, and the availability of equipment you need to expedite your work and give you the time that you need to help the students. For example, if you don't have a copy machine and you're sending out a lot of credentials, then you ought to see that you get one rather than sit and laboriously type them as I see many offices do, thereby tying up clerical help. I'm just suggesting very quickly, as I conclude, that in the areas of procedures, facilities, and so forth, you ought to make a listing of what is needed, and then see as well as you can that those things are attended to.

Let me end by talking a little bit about what is to come--I won't try to be a prophet--better men than I have made prophecies that missed by a mile, and I'm sure that if I try to make any kind of definite prophecies I will too. I will talk about the future only in the sense of what the indicators seem to be pointing to, and not in the sense of trying to say these things will certainly come to pass. However, it seems clear that

our placement procedures will become increasingly mechanized as we move to a day of closed circuit TV, video tapes, video telephones, and so forth. There are a lot of opportunities now available that we haven't had in the past, such as computers to identify people. All of these tools are moving us toward a day when there will be a great amount of mechanization of the placement process. I believe that it's going to be a trend for most placement people to utilize these tools and to get bogged down in the numbers and mechanics game. There is a real danger that people are going to too often be dealt with as things rather than as individuals. We can mechanize to the point that we have a lot of ways of presenting our people on paper in an impersonal manner. We need to deliberately become more individualized in our contacting and working with students, or they will simply get this mechanized kind of placement, and then, if we're lucky, some of them may just by the law of averages happen to have a successful career, but unfortunately, many will have lives of frustration and disappointment. We're entering a day when there will be rapid human obsolescence--we've already seen that. This is a factor that we need to recognize in placement. If people get aimed strongly at a career and succeed in it nicely for a few years, and it's a field which becomes obsolete, just down the road a little way, then we've served them poorly if they didn't see that in advance or if while they were in it they weren't preparing for a time when they might need to do something else.

Our job as placement officers is to be people-oriented--to facilitate people in developing and utilizing their unique potentialities in such fashion as will help them to contribute actively to the support of our society and will help them to gain increasing personal satisfaction with their lives. It's not an easy job, but an essential one.

"THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE RESUME"

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THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

An effective career placement office in a community college is a worthy goal, but a number of things are implied in that kind of a goal. First we must have jobs in which to place the graduates, then have sufficient numbers of qualified students coming to the office for help, or for assistance. Another requirement is that they have some idea of what they want, where they're going, or who they are. Most students don't know who they are, where they're going, what their competencies are, or much about the type of employers who could possibly utilize their powers. That's where a placement officer can be of enormous value. As placement people, I think it's easy to think of our function in isolation, as though the placement were the end of all good things in the community college. In fact, the placement process is one part of a developmental process in the student that must begin long before he ever enters a school of any kind, and that will continue as long as he lives. We step in as placement people at a pretty critical point in his lifetime, but there have been many such points before and will be many more to come, so we serve as a kind of temporary help at this critical point.

How many of us have had students come into the office and say--"Here I am, here's my degree, now what can I do?" or, "Where can I go?" If you begin to ask questions at that point, such as: "Where do you want to go? How far do you want to go? Who are you? What are you looking for?" you begin to run into dead ends or no responses on questions, because students unfortunately have been taught in the school system from the very beginning to give only answers and never to ask questions, particularly about themselves. I'd like to suggest that a resume may be helpful in getting into an employer's office for an interview, but I think that the actual process of developing a resume

is more important, whether the student ever uses it or not, for one basic kind of reason. The resume can be used as a tool to get students turned around 180 degrees from the kinds of socially oriented quests that they have been experiencing in our culture, to one that is entirely personally asset-oriented. In the process of developing a good resume a student is asked for nothing negative--we don't want to know how dumb you are, we want to know how bright you are. We don't want to know what you can't do, we want to know what you can do, in all the personally related dimensions that seem important.

Appropos of this, it seems to me that we live in a mistake-oriented society. By that I mean that other people are only too willing to point out our mistakes or limitations to us, and not frequently enough are they willing or able to extend a compliment about our successes. Let me give some examples of this phenomenon to partially explain why we wind up with the kinds of students that we have. How many of you, in a class of English composition in college, or high school, or grade school, turned in a term paper and got it back with all of your good, strong points reinforced--that's all--none of the red marks? What we usually tend to get is a paper coming back marked up with all the errors pointed out--commas missed here, misspelling, miscapitalization--all the errors. All the way through school we have our errors pointed out one after another after another after another. In family life, how often do we tell our children when they are doing well--when they're within the bounds that we set for them, how often do we say, "That's a good job. You know, you're really on, you're making us proud, keep it up?" Typically what happens, is that as long as the child is within the bounds that are set for so-called 'proper behavior,' nothing is said,

but when the child steps out of line, he gets whacked in one way or another, physically or psychologically, and brought back into line. So a child learns very quickly that people are willing to point out mistakes; mistakes frequently are communicated as being some form of inadequacy, and in many instances bad. The process begins early, and the school system reinforces it. Most children, when it comes time to begin school at five years of age, are just excited energy systems--they're lined up psychologically six months ahead of time trying to get into the school. They're identifying with their older brothers and sisters, and are a torrent of curiosity and question-answer seeking. George Leonard has written among other things, a booklet called "Education in Ecstasy." In that book he indicates that we have tired teachers. Across the land, our teachers are tired--they're overworked and underpaid--all of us can identify with that. But those teachers have a right to be tired because of the enormous amount of energy that they must have to put out to dam up to a mere trickle within two or three years, that torrent of curiosity that has come into the school. Within that time you can identify with a high degree of accuracy which students have been turned off, and which ones will not complete high school. In third or fourth grade you can pick out most of the failures; the symptoms are there--truancy, apathy, hostility--and this spontaneity is crushed out all the way through elementary school, secondary school, and college. Now when a student gets to the community college he really can point out a lot of areas where he's inadequate, but if you ask him to name his strengths, he's generally at a loss. It's not just teachers and parents who communicate these feelings of inadequacy, but also the whole advertising structure of our world. They are geared to making you feel inadequate unless you purchase whatever product is being sold. If you begin to analyze television commercials particularly (and how many of

those hit us every day--two or three hundred if you include billboards, television, newspapers, and radio?), each one in its own way implies that you can be better or that you're inadequate right now, unless you use Arrid, or Colgate, or Feminique, or whatever. It's just incredible how these pressures tell us over and over and over again--you stink, you're incompetent, you're inadequate, you're not very bright--on and on and on. The question should not be why there are so many failures, but how there are any successes at all with the kinds of pressures that most of us have lived with, in the kind of world we've created around us.

When a student comes into the community college he doesn't know very much about himself or the world of work, or about how he can fit into it in any kind of constructive way. He frequently doesn't know what his basic needs are as a human being, or he doesn't know what kinds of satisfactions he wants on a job. If you as a placement officer say at the termination point of his education, "What do you want in a job?" he may give responses like, "I'd like good pay and a chance for advancement," or other kinds of high level abstract concepts that mean nothing. What's good pay, and what's a chance for advancement? How far do you want to advance? When do you level off? Most people are imbued with the idea that advancing is good--but where do you stop? Because if you get on the advancement spiral, there's only one thing at the end of that, and that's failure--the higher you go, and the more competitive the next step is, then the next step after that will be increasingly competitive. You can go to the very top in whatever profession or endeavor you're in, and if you take the next step, eventually failure awaits you--that's a natural consequence. One of the most important things that all of us have to learn is that when we stop or level off on a career

and say, "That's it," then we must start developing horizontally in other kinds of activities and use the job for whatever it can provide in terms of personal satisfaction only. We need to know when to stop this incredible advancement syndrome that will eventually end in frustration, disillusionment, and failure. Some of the most successful people in our country today perceive of themselves as failures. Another answer that students typically give to the query "What do you want in a job?" is "I'd like to be successful." Well, that's fantastic. You know, everybody would like to be successful, but what does that mean? What is success? Is it making $50,000 a year, or $10,000 or $5,000? Is it having a wife who respects you, and whom you respect--whom you can communicate with? Is it raising healthy children or a garden, or whatever? Success is a very private concept that most people never consider. They accept this high level abstraction as something to go for, and they don't even know what it is.

It's very difficult to evaluate ourselves--we can evaluate other people much more easily. I can evaluate a student a lot more easily than I can evaluate me, and the same is true of all of us. To a greater or lesser extent, when you ask a student the questions: "What can you do? What have you got to sell? Why should anybody hire you? How are you different than ten million other 18 to 25 year olds, or any other students who are looking for employment?" unless the person has done some thinking about who he is, he's liable to come up blank, yet those are reasonable questions to ask. The resume preparation, the process of identifying assets, becomes a major part of career planning. The basic thrust in career planning is: "The Creation of an Effective Resume, And All That That Implies"--which means a rather intensive self-analysis, a good deal of group discussion, and

individual counseling. We shouldn't conceive of career planning as a traditional class structure, or as an information-giving situation, but rather as one of self-exploration. We were admonished by the oracle of Delphi a long time ago to: "Know thyself." If you know who you are as a human being, and what your needs are, what your potential is, then choosing a career flows much more naturally than it otherwise possibly could.

Most of us go through career choice processes backwards. We choose a career first, and then try to mold our personalities to fit the requirements of the job. "I'd like to major in psychology," a student says. "Why?" "Well, it's a nice job, you make a lot of money, high prestige." "How many years do you want to spend.....?" The depths of noninformation that our students have is incredible. The result is that in most of our community colleges, nationwide, the bulk of students never reach the placement office, because they never graduate. I think a safe generalization is that 75 per cent of your incoming students will not complete a program of any kind, and most will leave the college without ever having seen a counselor. In a counseling-oriented institution, a student-oriented community college, most of them will leave (if we can believe the studies that have been conducted recently), with some pretty disillusioning feelings about themselves, about higher education, about community colleges, and that is not good. I don't say that everyone that comes in the door should graduate--but I doubt that a 75 per cent (or more) attrition is an appropriate kind of thing. Perhaps higher education as we know it in the community college is not appropriate for most students who come there, but we admit them with the promise that it is appropriate. Unless we can work with them and constructively help them resolve their feelings of failure, frustration, and

disillusionment with society and education, then we have failed in our task; because we held out the promise (read your college catalogues--our statements of institutional philosophy are just beautiful), that all students have the right to individual counseling, to career and academic programs, and to community service programs that will develop them to their maximum potential. That implies much that we're not doing, never have, and perhaps never will, but it seems to me a laudable ideal, a worthwhile goal.

Placement as a function is an extraordinarily important one, because what happens to our graduates after they leave our portals determines the contribution our school makes to society. If most of our graduates wind up in psychiatric wards, students will stop coming, unless their goal is to go into a psychiatric ward. If they wind up unemployed, or not completing a program, then they'll stop coming. If they are successful, do they feel we contributed to their success? How many of us have developed any kind of systematic program for discussing, within the college, or within our service community, what's happening (both good and bad) to our students? Would it be a reasonable suggestion to think about things like testimonials from successful students, students who have gone through a program and who have become what they call successful on a job, students who have achieved their goals? We would like to hear from students who have been helped by the college and who have been upgraded in some way that they think is important. We could publicize those stories in an interesting, human-interest sort of way in newspapers and flyers. I've been at my institution for ten years, and this year I saw the first story about a successful graduate. To get those kinds of stories in the paper requires a great deal of footwork, groundwork, communications, and cooperation with a lot of people. But if

prospective students see that a guy went through a mechanical engineering program and is now successfully employed, making a decent living, and happy with his work, they are much more likely to come into that school than if they know nothing about it. They're much more likely to seek out the kinds of positive services that we're trying to provide.

What I'm suggesting is that the career placement function is one of the most critical community college guidance functions. The kind of feedback that you can provide, that you can put back into the system, back into the community and back into the curriculum planners about what's happening to our students, can have enormous ramifications for the success of your college. If you're going to have successful placements, then you need students who have some idea of who you are, what you do--who they are, and how they can use the college resources to get where they are going. The career-planning process (which really should occur much before they get to your office), is one of the main tools we can use in this developmental process. The resume preparation is the major thrust, the vehicle through which we can do this kind of self-analysis. Most articles that you read about resume preparation, whether they're for professional or for non-professional people, will tell you what a resume should look like, what it should include. They will suggest different kinds of formats that the information may be placed in. All that is beautiful stuff, but very seldom do you find something that will tell you or the student how to get at that information. Where does that information come from that you put in a resume? How do you decide what's important? How do you know what to elect from? That's been a major problem which very few people have been trying to do anything about. Our task as placement officers is to ensure that this self-examination process is an

integral part of the developmental process available to all students in our institution.

"SURVEY RESEARCH IN PLACEMENT FOLLOW-UP"

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SURVEY RESEARCH IN PLACEMENT FOLLOW-UP

Survey research is an art--it is not a science. Consequently, although I can give you some hints about how to construct questions for questionnaires, nonetheless you should rely on some expert opinion on your final form. There are two kinds of expert opinions: first, those people who have had in the past a great deal of experience in survey research, and second, the respondents.

Survey research generally involves two instruments, namely the questionnaire and the interview. Each has advantages and disadvantages. For one thing the questionnaire is less expensive. The interview will generally cost you somewhere on the order of $5 to $20 per respondent primarily because you have to pay for the interviewer, while questionnaires now run about $1.25 per head of respondent. A second consideration is that in an interview you will generally be restricted to fewer respondents than you will for a questionnaire. It is fairly easy to print out 10,000 questionnaires, dump them in the mail, and send them off. However, if it takes an hour per interview, you figure that a good interviewer can get through maybe five interviews per day, and if you are going to do 10,000 interviews, it will take you 10,000 divided by 5, or 2000 man-days. A third point of comparison is that the questionnaire is more efficient if you're asking short, direct questions which don't require too much thought on the part of the respondent. When you're asking things that require greater depth, or a longer response on the part of the respondent, then you're better off using the interview. This does not mean to say that you cannot get long responses on a written questionnaire, but while a person

will talk to you for an hour, he won't spend an hour on a written questionnaire. In short, written questionnaires have to be fairly concise.

Question:

One big advantage we claim for the interview is that the face to face contact makes for more validity. Do you agree with that?

Generally speaking you get comparable responses to comparable questions, although you also get more in depth responses with the interview. As a side note, research has indicated that if you're going to interview Blacks, you should have a Black interviewer, if you're going to interview Chicanos, you should have a Chicano interviewer, and so forth. Likewise, if an Asian sends out questionnaires to an Asian, you tend to get a higher response rate than you would if a Caucasian sent comparable instruments to Asians.

Question:

In a survey where you use both questionnaires and interviews, is there any basic difference between the responses you'll get that would make the whole survey less valid?

It would depend on the nature of the questions. If you're asking questions that require a great deal of thought, such as, "What do you think is the basis for the American policy in Southeast Asia?" you'll get radically different responses from a questionnaire than you would at an interview. The reason is that in the latter case the interviewer can explore tangents. That can't happen with a questionnaire. However, there are also similarities between questionnaire and interview schedules. For one thing, both instruments often ask for what we call biographical or demographic data. These

are common indicators helping to place the respondent in certain categories such as male, female, 19-20, 20-21, 22 and older, etc. Beware of these demographic items: put them at the back of your instrument rather than at the front, particularly if you feel that they might have an influence on some of the succeeding questions. Case in point: a survey was conducted at the University of Michigan in two forms, (a) demographic items first, and (b) demographic items last. One of the demographic items was religious preference, and they found there was a drastic difference in terms of a few content items on the two forms. One of the items, for example, asked about feelings about birth control. On Form B (demographic items last), Catholics were only a little more conservative on this particular issue than Protestants and Atheists. However, on Form A (demographic items first), Catholics pretty much toed the Church's line, having had the stage set for them right at the beginning. In short, they responded on many of the items as Catholics rather than as individuals.

Another demographic item to be careful with is that of "sex." You should phrase it this way: sex: male____female____other____. One student I remember did it this way: sex_____, and the result was that some people said, "Yes," some people said "None of your damned business," and one person responded, "No, unfortunately I'm still a virgin."

Another important thing to keep in mind when you are sending questionnaires out to a diverse group is that you make sure you define your terms. The Council on Higher Education recently sent out a questionnaire to all institutions within the state asking for the number of full time undergraduates, part time undergraduates, full time graduates, part time graduates, full time professionals, part time professional students, and so

forth. Unfortunately, they didn't define what "part time" or "full time" was, or what the term "professional" included. I can't stress how important it is to define your terms. Now, the only way to determine whether or not your terms are unambiguous is to pre-test the instrument. Pre-testing is a fairly simple process. What you do is randomly select fifteen or twenty potential respondents from the population from which you are going to pull your sample later on. You ask them to sit down and respond to the questionnaire, and then you quiz them to find out if any of the items were ambiguous or objectionable, or if there should be other items or other choices, or if some of the items should be deleted. You listen to the respondent. If it turns out that you've had to radically modify your questionnaire, you pre-test it again. What you have to do is come out with an instrument that will have minimal ambiguity, and which is fairly easy to fill out. The same holds true in an interview. You do not want to antagonize your respondent, because once that happens, he either quits, or he starts throwing the bull. To avoid this, when developing the instrument you should first of all sit down and come up with a list of questions you want answers to. Then come up with a list of questions which will focus in on the kinds of questions you want answered. Then go through and start deleting items, leaving only those with direct implications for the goal of the questionnaire.

Question:

What kind of return rates can you expect on a mailed questionnaire? Return rates range from about 2% for questionnaires you find in magazines or those distributed by third class mail, to as high as 99+%. In my office we generally get about 67% return, which is extremely high, considering that

we just use one follow-up.

Question:

You mentioned pre-testing. On the basis of a pre-test, have you ever decided that you're not going to be able to get the information you want through the method you have chosen?

Yes, what you generally do in an educational institution, since you've got limited funds, is to start out with a questionnaire, and occasionally you'll find that a questionnaire is not a meaningful instrument. We did that with an evaluation of the EOP program at the University. Even though Sam Kelly, Vice-president for Minority Affairs, and the various division heads signed the letter, we only got somewhere on the order of about a 10% response rate, which we thought was not at all accurate. So we piloted it by utilizing some social work graduate students who were trained to conduct interviews, and who contacted people only of their own ethnic group, and we got a much more meaningful response rate.

Question:

Along that line, can you use the questionnaire with the interview and get a common core of questions and answers?

That's generally what is done. The interviewer goes out with what is called a schedule (that's a technical term for the questionnaire). He asks the interviewee questions from the schedule, and as the interviewee responds, he writes down as much as he can of what the interviewee is saying. Then, after the interview is over, a good interviewer will sit down, summarize the responses, and in addition put down his own thoughts about it. He does not wait until after he's conducted five interviews for the day to start summarizing each one, because if he did he wouldn't know any more who said

what.

Question:

Would an interview be more candid than a questionnaire?

That depends both on the nature of the questions, and on the amount of rapport the interviewer can establish. If he can establish extremely good rapport, he'll get extremely candid responses. On the other hand, if he establishes poor rapport, he's likely to get more candid responses to an anonymous questionnaire than to a non-anonymous interview.

Question:

Would you get a better response if you sent out a questionnaire that was identifiable only by a code?

You'd damn well better tell the respondent why the code is there. One way to insure a certain degree of anonymity is to ask the respondent to sign his or her name on the cover letter. Then as soon as it comes back this cover sheet is torn off, and used only to determine who has and who has not responded so we won't bug these people with follow-up letters.

Question:

How sophisticated should a questionnaire be?

Not very. In short, when you design a question, don't try to show how well-educated you are. Instead of using the term salubrious, for example, use the term healthful, because, even though you may know what it means, the respondent may not, and if the respondent thinks you're trying to snow him, it'll end up in file thirteen.

Question:

How important is it to send questionnaires by first class mail?

It's quite important. It costs more, but you can be fairly sure they'll

be delivered. They will be forwarded if necessary, and of course they will be processed by the post office in essence on the day they are received. In addition, people tend to pay more attention to first class mail than to third class mail, even though your institution's name may be on it.

Question:

How do you find students who have been out of school for a few years?

What we've done with students who've been gone for let's say five years from the institution is to rely on two sources. One, the alumni office, which has a very distorted sample--those people who contribute to the alumni fund, and two, parents' permanent addresses. People who have some kind of tie to the institution.

Question:

You mentioned a few minutes ago: how do you go about establishing rapport with a group you want to sample?

One way is better PR. For example, if your questionnaire results in a policy change, make the change and publicize why you made it. Then succeeding generations of students who will have been exposed to this PR will take your questionnaires more seriously.

Question:

Do you find that that cover letter explaining what the questionnaire is about is almost as important as the questionnaire itself with respect to whether or not people respond?

It's very important, but not as important. It probably influences about 10-15% of your potential respondents.

Question:

Any pattern as to which ones it affects?

We haven't investigated that.

Question:

Are telephone interviews or follow-ups worth the effort?

Yes, telephone interviews are very much worthwhile, but beware of choosing your sample from the telephone book, because of unlisted numbers.

Question:

Is there any difference between follow-up on interviews and follow-up on questionnaires?

Yes. Follow-up is more important on mail questionnaires than it is on interviews. The reason is that you send your first mailing out and the returns dribble back in, and so you send a follow-up to try to get even more questionnaires sent back to you.

Question:

When do you send the follow-up letter or card?

Approximately one week after you send out an original letter. You should enclose a second copy of the questionnaire in case they've mislaid the first copy, and you should say something like, "If you've already responded please ignore this." Of course you will get a few people who respond twice, but only a few. At this point your response rate will begin to pick up, but once it drops off again, you may want to send yet another follow-up, say about two weeks after the initial mailing. That will pick up some more, and then you can try telephoning, or sending out interviewers, if you wish, depending on how large a response rate you want. What you can also do is to analyze these data, separately, over time. Take your first group of respondents, Group I,

and contrast that with Group II, or the result of the first follow-up mailing, Group III the second follow-up mailing, Group IV, the telephone interviews, etc.

Question:

I'm just wondering how realistic this one to two week follow-up is for most of our one-girl offices. That's fine if you've got just one person who can work on just nothing but follow-up.

One hint would be to machine process labels rather than type each one separately. Also, you don't wait until one week is past before you start getting ready for the second follow-up. Timing is important, too. Never send questionnaires to students just before finals. Instead, send them out as early in the quarter as possible. Let's say that you're sending them out on October 10th, so your questionnaire and the cover letter are dated October 10th. You've already designed your follow-up letter, which you've dated October 17th, and already printed. They could be stuffed in envelopes. You've also decided on a second follow-up, and you've dated that one October 24th. They're already all stuffed, and all you have to do is to attach the labels, then send everything out on the appropriate date.

Question:

Do you get a better response if you enclose a self-addressed envelope?

Yes. A self-addressed envelope, or a business reply envelope.

Question:

When is the best time to follow-up the June graduate?

If they've graduated, hopefully they've been placed. The College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington used to send out questionnaires

to graduating seniors near the end of June. They were happy with their response rate, which was about 33%. We took it over one year and came out with a 65% response rate by sending them out near the end of the quarter and telling the students to fill them out after the quarter was over. However, maybe you should send the questionnaire out as quickly as possible after the students have graduated, because those people who are going to be placed will probably already have been placed by the time of graduation.

Comment:

I think there's some difference between four year graduates and junior college graduates, because you find that a lot of the latter really don't know what they're going to do in the Fall until late August or so.

You in the community colleges have an advantage we at the university do not have. The very term community college connotes that most of these students come from your community, so that theoretically at least you can keep closer tabs on them.

Question:

Returning to follow-up for a minute, do you or the phone company or somebody know what would be the best time to call people?

Morning is the worst possible time to call, because you may wake people up. Call in the evening when most people are home, but never at dinner time.

Question:

Did I understand you to say that everybody receives a first follow-up?

That depends on whether you've gotten identifying information from your respondent. If you've got his name, you don't send him the follow-up mail.

Question:

This is a small matter, but your self-addressed stamped return has got to be addressed, and that's going to be expensive if you don't use all that follow-up material.

If you use business reply envelopes, then only the ones that are returned will you have to pay for. You end up paying two cents more--instead of eight cents you'll be paying ten cents, and of course if you get a 100% response rate, it's going to cost you more.

Question:

I think that you really save yourself a lot of trouble by putting their names, or having them put their names on. I don't think there's that much objection, as long as you explain that you don't intend to use the information against them.

Let me mention a questionnaire put out by ACE a few years ago which we had to burn. First, ACE did not tell the institutions what questions were on the questionnaire before they asked us to participate. On the questionnaire they had: social security number (which was legitimate from their standpoint, because they were interested in knowing whether the students change colleges, and it's nice identifying information with a unique number). They also asked question like, "Have you participated in demonstrations against the war in Vietnam?" At that point in time there was a bill before Congress that said that any student who did participate in demonstrations against the war in Vietnam would lose all federal aid. There were other questions like this, and the students came back and said, "Social Security number, why didn't you just ask the males for their draft number?" So you see, when you ask a respondent to put down identifying information on a questionnaire with

items like this, which are very sensitive, you blow it.

Comment:

Once we sent out a follow-up and got nothing back. So before we did it a second time, we educated the students as to what follow-up was, and how important their responses would be to us. That time we got a 70% return rate.

That's a very good idea.

Question:

We want to design a questionnaire to find out if our school is meeting the educational needs of the students. More often than not we consider students as dropouts who may in reality only be taking one course a quarter, or a year, but they're doing it on a regular basis. These aren't dropouts, and yet statistically they show up that way. Another problem we see is how to ask questions that students will answer. We know, for example, that people do not like to indicate that they do not have the mentality to make it through a certain curriculum. Consequently, when asked why they dropped out, they may say, "Financial reasons." How can we find out the real reasons?

Comment:

That brings up another question. Just how important is the degree as such as opposed to how important it is that the student achieve his educational objective? Many of these people we may term as dropouts, as you mentioned, may be just coming in for one term to accomplish a specific thing and then leaving for a term or two terms, and then coming back again, and again they're classified as a dropout.

Comment:

Middle-class standards say that we should be ambitious and we should

strive to achieve a higher level in our initial position. Our vocational students, however, are interested only in getting a day to day job, something from 8 to 5, that's going to pay the bills. They're simply not looking for anything more. If that's the case, why do they have to complete an auto mecnanic's course, if after six months they know enough to get the position that's been offered to them? At our school several students have dropped out half way through a vocational course, or three-fourths of the way through, because they know enough at that time to get a job, and that's all they're interested in. Is this so bad?

Comment:

Well, at some point beyond the six months they may have been exposed to an individual or an instructor who would have made them think in terms of more than just a day to day existence. I think that's one of the goals in our educational system as well.

True, but more times than not we force our value systems on the disadvantaged student who is really only interested in filling his stomach with food, someone who is starving to death.

Comment:

It begins to point up a pretty solid case for competency-based objectives when you start designing a course. People learn at different rates, and if you have a competency-based program, you may have some people finishing in five months, others finishing in eighteen months, and so forth.

At this point maybe we should break into small groups and then come back to talk more specifically about some aspects of follow-up.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Group I:

Our group concentrated on the dropout phenomenon, or the "fade-away student," and the burning question seemed to be, Where do we start? What do we ask? How do we find out from these students where they are, what types of firms they are working for (if any), if their job is related to their training, how much money they are making, and so forth?

Let's hear now from Group III.

Group III:

In our group we talked about many of the same basic problems that have already been discussed. One thing that was brought out was the uniqueness of each institution, and the fact that some questions might relate to one institution but not necessarily to another. A second point that was made was that a pilot study is most necessary if you're going to do any kind of follow-up study. Something else talked about was the kinds of methods of compiling data. You shouldn't get too hung up on hardware, on the idea of using a lot of computer time. Much of the tabulation can be done by hand, especially if a questionnaire is relatively simple. Along this line, it might be advisable, in some cases, because of cost factors, that an institution consider developing a very simple questionnaire to begin with. In fact, maybe our regional office could do something about getting core kinds of information for the member colleges, and then each one of us could develop questionnaires on our own for other purposes.

Comment:

One thing all the community colleges are very paranoid about is designing a questionnaire that will reach dropouts. We did one this year, with a lot of purposes. We hoped to get some data that was useful to the institution, but one of the behind-the-scenes purposes was just to find out how you design a better questionnaire to that group.

How about Group II?

Group II:

One of the things we agreed on was that there is no use in mailing out a questionnaire unless you really need the information. Think about what you are going to do with it once you have it--is it just a statistical study, or are you going to really be able to do something with it? Speaking technically now, there are some things our office has done I'd like to share with you. One, we talked our admissions office into printing four labels at the same time they do the graduation list. One label goes on the certificate, and we get the other three. These we use for follow-up. One other thing that we talked about in our group was the fact that the reason we do questionnaires is because we really don't know much about our students while they are at our institutions, and consequently we try desperately to find out something about them after they leave. There must be a way to correct this situation.

Comment:

I particularly agree with your first point. The important thing in any survey is to be able to interpret it, and then to be able to do

something concrete with the information once you have it. From the standpoint of career placement, we want to know who's working, who isn't, what we can do in order to improve our programs, and what we can do to assist students with additional training in certain areas, and then we want to be able to report to some people who can affect the changes. However, we have to be careful, for example, that programs aren't immediately cancelled because of one follow-up, etc.

Dr. Reitan:

Jim, we haven't much time left. Would you like to respond to any of the points brought up here?

Dr. Morishima:

Well, for one thing, there is really not that much difference between hand machine and computer analysis. It's just a matter of whether you are doing it by putting little chit marks down by hand, or whether you are putting them on IBM cards, and using a sorter, in which case you have machine analysis, or whether you put them on IBM cards or on tape and dump them on a computer, in which case you have computer analysis. The costs of each will be dependent on a number of factors, such as how often you're going to be conducting a particular kind of analysis and how far you can generalize a given program for additional kinds of analysis. One of the techniques you ought to be using if you are going to use hand analysis is to figure out how you are going to want the data broken down. Take a simple example: if you want it by sex, and Voc vs. transfer, generally speaking, you have two different sexes, and generally speaking you've got maybe two different programs. That means, as you get your questionnaires back (if you're doing it by hand), that you break it into four different piles:

you have one group that's male-VoTech; one group that's male-transfer; female-VoTech; female-transfer. Later on, if you want to combine your transfers, you can add them together, if you want to combine your VoTech, you can add them together, if you want to combine your sexes, you can add them together; then you'll come out with four discreet numbers that you can add together, rather than going through three different analyses of the same data. If you wanted to add in another variable, you might end up with fifteen different piles, but you break them into these discreet piles so you can come up with frequency distributions for each item, and then later on you can combine them. It's much easier to add them together at a later point in time than it is to go through and conduct different analyses by hand each time. In terms of getting the data ready for machine processing, you should come out with a unique record for each respondent--in that way you can again combine on various variables. Frequency of follow-up--that depends on your purposes, and depends on the number of people you have to follow-up. If you are a large institution that may have a thousand people leaving, and you want to conduct three follow-up studies, it may be that you will want to have 333 and 1/3 per year, so you don't hit the same respondent every year. Also, whenever you have repeated measures, asking the same individual the same questions many times, you can have an impact on that individual. A simple case in point would be something in the political sphere: if you ask them, "What do you think about tax reform in the State of Washington?" and if you ask them the same question six months later, then the chances are, because they've been asked that question in the first place, they will attend more to whatever publicity comes out on tax reform in the meantime, so that the very fact that

you've asked them the question once will influence their responses the second time you ask them. So what you can often do, in terms of survey methodology, is to take your 1000 and send out 333 one time, then have an overlap the second time so that you send out maybe 500 the second time and 500 the third time, to see what kind of an impact the very fact that you asked the question has on their attitudes and their attitude changes. The frequency then, of your follow-up depends upon a number of factors: what kind of an influence do you think time has? When do you do it? That depends on what you are after. If you're after their expectations about their potential job, you don't ask them after they've gotten their job and after they've been on the job for six months, because the fact that they've been on the job for six months will again influence what they remember their goals having been when they got the job. Recall measures are pretty poor. You don't ask a student after he's graduated, "What were your goals when you entered this institution?" You should ask that question when they enter the institution, and then later on you can ask them whether their goals have changed. If you've got some way of collating that original questionnaire with the second questionnaire (which, incidentally, you ought to tell the student you're going to do), then you can make your comparison. But to ask them after they've graduated, "What were your goals when you entered this institution?" will result usually in diverse answers. Their recall is going to be influenced by their experiences, and the recall measure will not be a complete measure. Beware of omnibus instruments--one instrument cannot possibly focus on everybody. You probably should not, for most questionnaires, utilize the same instrument for your evening class program people, your VocTech people, your transfer people, your potential

employers, the draft board, the Daughters for the Revolution, all of these different groups. Design an instrument which is focused more on the unique group that you are interested in. You may ask the same questions, or there may be overlapping questions, but nonetheless, design separate instruments aimed at the particular target you're going to survey. In terms of follow-up techniques, some of you might be interested in reading Terman's studies. They've utilized certain techniques there that you might also be able to utilize here. Any instruments that we come up with here, again, will have to be modified, depending on your own unique institution. Each unique factor will result in different kinds of things. So you design a different instrument for a residential college as opposed to a commuting institution, and things of this sort. In defining the term dropout, there's no reason why you have to say dropout on a questionnaire is there? "Our records indicate that you were a student at this institution. You've left, and we know that students have a number of different reasons for leaving. Please answer the following question"--this type of thing. You include there: they found a job, financial or health reasons, etc., and you ask each respondent to answer each of the items. Then you can ask them to go back and indicate what the single most important reason was within given areas. There's no reason why you have to design just one item that says, "I'm not in school for the following reason or reasons," and then you have in there--health, finances, better job, transfer, and a whole slew of items, because then you mix them up, and there's no way you can determine whether any of those factors had more of an influence than other factors. As the hand-out that I gave you earlier this morning will indicate, when you ask questions, ask about some unique thing, and

don't combine things. If you feel that the categories are going to be combinations, you might design separate items for each of the possible responses, depending on your own goals. One thing I mentioned this morning that should be stressed is: when you design an instrument and you've arrived at your final questions, ask yourself, regardless of what the responses are, is this indeed going to have an influence on what the institution does? If it doesn't, there's little need in asking the question.

"PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PLACEMENT"

Richard Jennings,
President
Evans and Associates
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"Public Relations in Placement"

For the most part today, what I'd like to do is pretend that I don't know anything about your business, which is absolutely correct. I'd like to pretend that you have approached me to talk to you about ways that you can apply the principles of public relations and advertising in your particular area or specialty. So, this will then be a simulated, condensed, think-session, which is the way we usually do it with a prospective client. We'll sit down with him, and we'll gather facts, because obviously you can't do a thing until you know what you're talking about. The more facts you have, the better off you are; the more definition of what you're trying to do, the better off you are. I'm surprised by how often we meet with prospective clients, and sit down and force them to think about what they're trying to accomplish in their business, only to find out how scantily they have really thought this thing through in their own mind--just what are they in business to accomplish? Who are they trying to reach, and what are they trying to say to them? That's the scope of the approach that I would like to use today, but first I would like to kind of establish some common ground rules, or levels of understanding, as to what public relations and what advertising is. It's surprising how many misconceptions there are about what advertising and public relations is, so first of all, I'd like to ask you if you've heard any good definitions of what advertising is lately. What is your opinion of what advertising is?

Response:

It means the selling of a product.

Okay, good. I'll just change that a little bit: excitement and effectiveness in selling--that's probably about as good as we can expect to do in a

short time. Anybody like to add to that, or detract from it? Okay, let's go on then to PR. What would you say is the definition of public relations?

Response:

There was one appeared in the Reader's Digest not too long ago, about a fellow that got a job as a PR man for the state department; he wrote home to tell his parents about it, and his Dad wrote back saying, "Gosh, I can't quite figure out what you're doing: public I can understand; relations I can understand, but public relations ----------."

That's not untypical; lots of people feel the same way about it. A lot of things are thrown into this category, and called public relations, which may or may not, maybe should or should not be in there.

Response:

Might it be a projection of an image to the people you are trying to serve?

Okay, putting your best foot forward. That's kind of what it's all about, isn't it? Putting your best foot forward--now, there are all kinds of ways to do this, for example: there's such things as press agentry, which is not good, but it is done; there's straight public relations, which is telling the truth about yourself, and your product, your company, your service, in such a way that it will accomplish excitement and effectiveness in this area. In other words, creative communication is what all of this adds up to. (1) Creative communication. Let's just for a minute talk about creativity, because that is the heart of the matter--that's what every public relations and advertising agency

has to do in order to survive--that's what they're hired to do, is to create, or to come up with creative ideas. (2) Motivational communications. If you want to change an opinion about you or about something that you're trying to sell, then you had better give some information that people don't now possess, that's going to influence them and motivate them to change their opinion of you or your service--and you'd better do it in an interesting manner, because the average individual is bombarded with four to six thousand advertising, public relations, and communications impressions per day. An individual is going to have one hard time sifting out and remembering yours, unless you do an awfully effective job of presenting it. You do it creatively, you do it in such a way that it is interesting and it captures attention, and says something truthful that can be believed, and is credible. That's a big order, but that's exactly what it's all about. (3) Another way, but unlike defining creativity, is relating the unrelated. Now that sounds kind of like a platitude, and it is in a way. I'd like to go into this just very briefly, a little bit more than we have anything else, because I think this is the essence of what you have got to be able to do more and more of in order to compete with the other programs, to place your graduates. We're all interested in selling a product, and if it sells the product, and it does it truthfully, and in an interesting way, then we've accomplished our goal. Let me give you a couple of examples of what I mean from some of our recent presentations. In one case we had a community, 'Whisper Hill,'which is over at Bellevue. The problem presented is that the development is a small group of homes tucked away in the trees, off the main thoroughfares, off the main roads

in the area, very difficult to find unless you knew where it was. What we had to do is come up with an idea to attract people's attention, to intrigue them to come out and go to the bother of finding this place. So we decided we'd call the development 'Whisper Hill,' because of its nature, where it is located, in a quiet area away from major roads. Then we thought that we would create the whole campaign around the idea of 'Be quiet, sh-h-h, nobody knows where it is, it's hard to find it; it's so quiet and so peaceful out there that nobody's ever heard of it.' And so we created the campaign, 'Sh-h-h, keep it to yourself, there's not enough to go around, only 42 homes available.' All of which is true, but we think there's a little twist there in order to give a really rather ordinary small community a little bit of pizazz and charisma. Here is another one that we did for the Weyerhauser Corporation, "Equity Memo for Young Executives." We took a business term 'equity in investments,' which most business executives are very keenly interested in, and we related it to the purchase of lots in golf course communities. That was taking the unrelated and bringing them together in what we hoped and felt was a logical, and turned out to be a related idea. Another example concerned Farrell's Ice Cream Parlors. We took the idea of having a barrel of fun, which is a very well-known saying, and we tied it in with having fun at Farrell's. So we did some ads for Life magazine, 'More fun than a barrel of monkeys,' and showed all the fun and excitement that you can have at Farrell's. Here again, you take the familiar, and you relate it to what you're trying to say--so you take the related and the unrelated, and you relate them. Here's another thought--this is an ad for the State of Utah. Again we took: 'Utah offers the best of both worlds--livability and productivity'--so we took a man and showed half

of him in livability, and the other half in productivity. This was run in various magazines in order to attract industry to the State of Utah by showing them what can be done there, what Utah has to offer. Here's an ad for Schiller Bay. We took a very well-known personality in the Northwest that you've all heard of, Don McCune, who does the Exploration Northwest half hour TV series for KOMO-TV; he's an acknowledged and respected man who's interested in environment and ecology. We took him out and showed him the development of Schiller Bay, and he was impressed enough that he agreed to endorse the product by saying, "It's been my pleasure to see a masterpiece------." Here, in the area of land development, which is under attack by environmentalists and ecologists, we invited an environmentalist and ecologist and showed him something that was good, something that was respectful and well-done as far as land-development is concerned, and he was impressed enough to agree to an endorsement. Okay, that's relating the unrelated, and that's the essence of creativity, and this is the sort of thing that I think that you are going to have to do.

Now let's get down to our little think-session. We'll pretend that we're working this thing out together. The ground rules for a think-session are that you're dealing with two parties: you're dealing with a party of the first part, which is the advertising and public relations people who know very little about your business, but they know a lot about their own. You're dealing with yourselves, who know a lot about your business, but very little about theirs. So when you talk about ideas, when ideas are presented, you don't pooh-pooh anything--you accept everything, because a lot of ideas will be offered in ignorance, but what it accomplishes is, it tends to provide springboards to something that is

really very worthwhile, and after all, what you're looking for is new approaches, new ways to do the old, and make it more exciting and more saleable. You are not going to arrive at that goal by examining what you're already doing and using that as your springboard. You've got to branch out, you've got to extend yourself; you've got to get a little bit out into left field, and then you can bring yourself back to center; if you have the ability, if you have common sense and some wisdom, and know your job, that's what this is all about. So, first of all, we've got to get the facts in: what is your service? Let's list them on the blackboard.

Response:

We're tryi[illegible] convince the employers on the merits of hiring people with less than a baccalaureate degree, but with post-secondary education--how these people coming in at this middle level of training are going to be a real asset to the organization.

I think that's a good one; .....I have an image of the community college effort, that I am sure, is completely inaccurate; but my impression of community colleges is that it is a place where adults go to brush up on their skills.

Response:

That's one-third of it.

Okay, well at least I'm not completely wrong.

Response:

Our greatest concern is those people getting training and desiring employment over a period of time of two years or less. The college itself is concerned with students transferring to places like this

institution, and it's concerned with adults wanting to brush up. But this particular group is concerned with people who are interested in jobs at the end of a period of time of two years or less, and not going on to school.

Industry hires people on the merits of community college training, which would embrace the idea of being able to sell placement services at the point in time where students arrive at that particular educational objective.

Response:

I really think those two things are being done. In the communities we're trying to serve we do an additional thing--we really sell the whole service of the community college. We have probably the best opportunity to do that of any group on the campus. I think we can offer the employer an opportunity to invite us to come and give in-house training in his shop. We can set up special courses for his people on campus. There's just a wide variety of things, plus there are things we ask in return, such as listing jobs with us and employing our students part-time while they're going to school.

Response:

In some respects this office is the visible, tangible thing that the public can see, the product that is coming out of the community college.

All right, have I captured that here?

Response:

We offer a pre-screening service, too.

Response:

Helping our products, or our graduates help themselves.

Okay, training graduates.

Response:

One task we have is to provide information to the college as to the effectiveness or currency of our curriculum as pertaining to the world of work.

Provide feedback. All right, I think we've probably gotten most of them, haven't we? In all of this, I think we all have in our minds, and I certainly have in mine, a better idea of just what your services are. Now the next question that we should discuss so that we can know what type of communication we're doing is: who needs to know about your services?

Response:

1. Students
2. Faculty
3. Administration
4. Employers
5. General Public.

You left one or two out that I can think of: another one was the press, and high schools. Now we know what our objectives are, what we are trying to do, who we're trying to contact, what our services are, what our objectives are, and who we're trying to convince. Now, the task that we'll spend the balance of our time on is: What are the good ways to tell them? How do we reach these people? How to tell them. Let's just take them one at a time: 1. Students: now what can we do to get the message of your services across to the students?

Response:

(a) news releases, brochures
(b) speaking to classes--presentation in the classroom
(c) campus visits, mainly bulletins
(d) campus radio (closed circuits) where there is one
(e) campus PA system
(f) other students, word of mouth

Okay, I think we've got the bulk of them down there; now let's talk about some of these: on brochures, I don't know whether I can tell you anything about brochures that you don't already know, except that you apply the principles of excitement and sell into your brochures so that the students will be interested. How do you handle your news releases?

Response:

If we have an interesting project, and we make the local paper aware, they will come and write the article. Other times we write material that I'm sure they should rewrite. I only know of a couple of times where they printed what I actually wrote.

Don't feel bad about that. Newspaper people are very jealous of their skills, and when you get down into some community papers, you don't have that level of professional journalism where they'll write up anything that you send in. They're short-staffed, so what you write is what they print. Your better papers will almost always rewrite what you give them, because they're worried that what you have written you've also sent to 300 other newspapers, and they don't want their story appearing in somebody else's newspaper--it's a sign of sloth. You really have to have something that I think is newsworthy to really go down and bother them. I think if you go there once a week, pretty soon they're going to turn you off. If you're there maybe once a year to have a kind of unexciting thing, but just indicating maybe how many students are placed, or how many students need jobs, or something like that, but then the rest of the time you're really concentrating on new things, exciting things, then they respond pretty well. How do you determine the newsworthiness of a piece of information?

Response:

Well, if we have a new project, of which we've had several this last

year, they certainly get that material.

New projects?

Yes. Other than that, they do a human interest story about the college from time to time. We might encourage them to do something in regard to students who have been placed from the college.

A lot of times it's good to go down and get acquainted with the editors of your local newspapers--go down and introduce yourself, tell them what you have in mind, that you have information that comes out of your department that you think is newsworthy from time to time, and that you'd like to know to whom you should talk when this happens, so that they can give an evaluation to your material. But don't ever go to a newspaper and say, "We have something that is newsworthy." Rather, you should say, "We have some information that we think may be of interest to you. We'd like to give it to you for your consideration. Now who can I give it to, or who should I deal with? I don't want to bother you all the time, every time I have a piece of information that might be interesting to you, so will you please tell me who I should contact?" I'd go right up to the editor on this first visit, and he'll probably give you to someone else. I'm speaking now about daily papers; weeklies are less of a problem because they are less hide-bound. They're working on a one-time or two-time or three-times a week pressure, but the daily paper is working on a daily pressure, four or five editions every day. So it's important from your point that you don't just flub the newspaper with every little thing that comes out. Also, on the daily papers, it's good to deal with two different people. You can deal with your business editor, and he can do one kind of a feature story for you; and you can deal with

your city desk editor, who can do another kind of a feature story. The general news release he'll be interested in, and also he'll be interested in assigning a local reporter to do a feature story. There are lots of ways that you can get yourself in print without having a hide-bound, hard-core news story. You can have something that's interesting about one of your graduates. Maybe there's something unusual or particularly good on his accomplishments, or some point of difference that people don't hear about every day. That's one way to get this done, and then in the process you're calling attention to your whole service. You'll have to establish how far you can go--the higher that you go in the newspaper business, the less opportunity you have, the more imaginative and more creative you have to be. Television is another area that you shouldn't overlook. You should get in touch with your TV news editor, or the documentary editor. You can talk to him--in the same manner just indicated--about the fact that you are in effect training people for tomorrow's society. At the same time you could suggest that there may be a good story for the media--a documentary, or a five minute news clip, or something like this from time to time, on how it is going with the graduating class. Radio is the same way. Some radio, especially pop shows (like Public Pulse on KIRO), are receptive to the suggestion that they interview the job placement director of your college, and ask him how graduates are finding places to work and what services his office is offering them. Stations with talk-shows would be very interested in that kind of an approach. You'd probably find yourself on radio if you make this proposal, or find somebody else if you don't want to, who would like to be the spokesman for your college.

We indicated using ads in campus papers. I don't know whether this is productive, but it's an idea. You may want to run an ad in a campus

paper. "Are you taking full advantage of the college employment service? We are in touch with major employers, both nationally and regionally, and then etc., etc., etc."

Response:

Nearly every week we list some of the most current jobs in the school newspaper, and it has a very good effect on the students. Good. I would imagine that for the most part, paid ads in local papers would be a little bit out of your reach economically. After all, you are dealing almost entirely with public relations, not with advertising.

Response:

There is no reference to personal contact here. How about contact with the faculty, also?

It seems to me that the degree to which you can find good jobs for the graduates is the degree to which your college is going to be viewed by the community as successful. I would think there would be a direct relationship between the attractiveness of going to your college, and the reputation that is circulated in the community about your college, and the desirability of your graduates. We all know there are certain blue chip universities in the country which have the reputation of having employers seek their graduates out because they have had such good success with them. Every once in awhile you hear about these colleges: some of them have it because of their sports reputations; some of them have it because of their medical schools; and some of them have it because of their business administration schools--whatever their forte or speciality happens to be at these universities. Industry, medicine, business, engineering or whatever, look to these colleges as their first choice for seeking graduating seniors. It would seem to me that one of your principle

public relations objectives should be to establish this kind of a reputation and charisma with community employers for the school. In order to do this, you must have the support or money that only faculty and administration can provide for you, and somehow you have to sell yourself to them on that basis. Maybe I'm way off, but if I were a placement director, one of the first things I would do is put together a ring-tailed presentation, and I would go to the college president and to the faculty, and I would make sure that they understand that their jobs, indirectly, and the success of the college, directly, depend on how well you are able to place the people that they turn out. You are probably in an extremely competetive position in this regard, because not very many people understand what you're doing, or what the college is doing.

Response:

The placement office itself within the college is strictly a service; it's an overhead, just like in industry. And if the faculty and administration don't know what we are doing, don't participate, we can very soon become strictly an overhead; without significant results, we can jeopardize the whole office and the program of placement.

All right now, how are you going to do this selling job, if in fact you agree that that needs to be done?

Response:

Meeting with the faculty committee?

How are you going to do it? When you go before a faculty committee, what is your modus operandi? You're going to tell about your benefits to them, because they're going to be interested in knowing "What's in it for me?" You should orient whatever you tell them to answering that. Don't say,

"I am here to tell you about how good I am." That's not the approach. The approach is: "I'm here to tell you how what I'm doing is going to help you." Now how are you going to do that? What are you going to use?

Response:

Why not tell them about the graduates within their own program that you've placed--where they are working?

Okay, that's a good one. You could get a dossier on some of the graduates that they know personally, and say, "I thought you'd be interested to know that so and so is here and here, and he's been successful, and so on and so forth."

Response:

In many cases the faculty is already doing some placement for students in their programs, particularly in many of the technical and vocational fields. Perhaps we should tell them that we can support what they are doing.

Okay, then you're the coordinator of this team, and you're reporting to them, in some cases.

Response:

You're trying to sell what the college is doing--to the administration--so they'll know about it.

Yes, that's good. Now what I'm suggesting specifically is that with a little bit of imagination you can give a presentation that will have them leaving the room talking about it, instead of looking at their clocks wondering, "Time to go to lunch?" I don't know how much money you have available for developing presentations--that's one of the things we aren't going to talk about today--but if you have an 8 millimeter camera, you can put together a little home movie presentation. You can go out and take some pictures of some of your graduates. You can take pictures of what's

going on in your offices; something that's visually interesting for them to look at. Another possibility is slides, if you don't want to go to the expense of 8 millimeter. You also can use an overhead projector, or a chalk board. Testimonials from graduates, and how great they felt about us, how important the placement program was to them, are also valuable. You can seek them out and ask them if they would be willing to write a letter. We do this all the time. When we go out looking for a new client, we get all of our existing clients to write nice letters about us, then we mail them to this prospective client, and you can do the same thing. If you can have a program, a daily or a regular program of feedback to the administration or the faculty, then when you go up to ask for an increase in your budget, it's a lot easier than if it were the first time you'd even entered their thoughts for a year.

Response:

Another thing we did when we had recruiters visiting the campus was that every time a recruiter came we set a lunch appointment. All of the appropriate faculty and these recruiters would sit down and just rap about what was new in the program, what were the new things coming in industry, and so on.

That's good. The University of Utah has one of the most outstanding placement services in the country--at least they have had that reputation ever since I can remember. This is getting ahead of ourselves, but they treat employers like kings. Whatever your method is of communicating back to them, make sure that you have something interesting to show them, to tell them about.

Response:

One thing that is particularly important is that we work through proper channels when we contact industry.

Going through proper channels. In every type of program, except maybe the ones that are peopled by extremely jealous and insecure people, the best procedure is that you go to them and explain what you want to do, and ask them, or say, "You're the fellow that I should go to, and I'm here; but to save you time and not to let this become a carbon of a carbon, I wonder if it would be all right with you, if you would give me your blessing, to go directly to some of these other people on these programs." Now oftentimes, when they understand, if you take them into your confidence, this will work. That's public relations. That's your own individual, personal, public relations--your own method of dealing with other people.

Response:

One of the first things you have to do is to identify what the channel of communication is to employers.

Probably the most important activity that you have is the care and treatment of employers. What do you offer them, why do they come to your college instead of somebody else's college? Why should they come to you? I firmly believe that if you were aggressive, creative, and imaginative, you could create a program and a reputation that would overshadow, or at least be the equal of, some of the bigger universities. It's my observation as an employer that most placement programs ignore their obligation to the businessman. I have yet to have a college or university come to me and offer me anything in the way of help or service. They seem to assume that I know that they're turning people out here, but I don't know anything about their qualifications, I don't know where to go, I don't know who to talk to. From time to time we have need for young college graduates to work their way into the communications business.

I know of several outstanding institutions that don't leave a stone unturned. I don't know what all they do, but I know that they have a successful program of contacts. A good PR advertising technique is to not get an ingrown toenail by looking at yourself all the time, but circulate around. On your vacation, call the placement directors of some of these places where they are having outstanding success, and find out why, what they're doing to help the employers, to find out what they want. Additionally, you can contact employers, asking "What can we do to help you better? What do we need to do?" Too often both business and the college operate in a vacuum with respect to each other. Colleges are here to train people for business, education, engineering, and all the other occupational skills. It seems to me that there should be a direct, close, and continuing relationship and rapport. I would think that placement directors should be the ones that should spearhead this, because they are dealing with the end product. You are what it is all about. Whatever goes on at the college is translated--it comes out either good or bad right in your office--at least it should. So, there are a lot of ways to do this, and we can just get down to specifics now.

What ways do you have of reaching the employers? Do you have a mailing list? What kind of a mailing list is it? How comprehensive is it? What do you mail to them?

Response:

Do you get into the business of evaluating who reads what in different kinds of publications? Do you find that certain people will read your stuff more than others? What I'm getting at is: if we all make up these letters and send them out to employers, and

nobody ever reads them, then we really aren't doing the job. I don't know why they wouldn't read them. I would think that your type of a letter would have a very high percentage of readership, providing you do a few things: you don't address it to an occupant, but make it personal; you don't put it through a metering system, but go to the trouble to put a stamp on it, even if you do it by hand, or hire one of your college people to help you do this. You should address these letters personally, instead of 'To whom it may concern.' Your professional direct mail services have devices to make every letter look like it is personally typed by you, and it may be that you could work with one of the direct mail people in your town, on a public service basis or a semi-public service basis. Get them to help you with your mailing list, and with your techniques for mailing. I would type the address, type the envelopes with a typewriter, not with an IBM machine. It's nice to have these computerized lists, but you have to be careful how you use them, or else they do have a high mortality factor. But I would think that most employers of any size or consequence who would receive a letter from a community college, especially if that letter had something on the outside of it such as, 'confidential job placement information,' or something of this kind, those few words would appeal to their self-interest, and they would read it.

Response:

So you put that on the envelope?

That's one way--you could put that on the envelope. I think that probably just receiving a letter from a community college, with my name typed on it--I would never in a hundred years not open that.

Response:

To give you one example of how we use this down in our college

(and indirectly tying in with public relations and the faculty, too), we've just added an MTST typing course, with magnetic tape selectric typing. I've had the instructor make up my mailing list for me; it gives her an exercise for her students. Anytime we want mailings, she has the tapes there, and she just sets it into one of these electric typewriters and types out a beautiful letter.

That's just exactly what you pay for when you go to a mailing bureau. If you've got that service at your college, you're home free, and you can do some really effective direct mail work that way. We deal with the direct mail bureaus. Direct mail bureaus have lists that are so sophisticated now that they have the market broken down by almost every type of category that you want. For example: by income; by job type; by geographic area; by number of children; by divorcees; whatever you want, whomever you want to reach. All you have to do is tell a good mailing bureau what you want to do, and chances are if they don't have it, they can certainly get that list for you.

Response:

Can you get a listing of possible prospects from these services?

Not usually. They've paid a lot of money for it, and they get their money back by selling them to people like us, selling the service. And of course if they gave that list to us, then it would obviously be a problem for them, because then we could give it to somebody else, and before you know it, they'd be out of business.

Response:

Do you know off-hand what they charge per unit?

Well, we figure that it costs about 13¢ a letter to get a single page letter stuffed, addressed, stamped, and mailed. A lot of times these

outside professional services can be hired to do it cheaper than you can do it.

Response:

One of the biggest problems that I have found is that personnel directors and personnel people seem to rotate and move so fast that it's hard to keep up with them. I know a lot of times if you have to mail a letter addressed to the "Personnel Department" or "Personnel Director," it loses some of its effectiveness.

I imagine that would be a real problem. By the way, are you visited by national employers like the IBMs and the Kodaks and International Harvester? Do they seek you out? Are they interested in your graduates?

Response:

Not to the extent that they seek out the four year people. Some of this could be a matter of education, too. For example, General Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena was only visiting Cal State and Los Angeles, and our campus is just a quarter of a mile or half a mile from their location. By writing to the laboratory, I pointed out they were passing up a good bet--our two year engineers who were going to transfer--if they were approached by GPL prior to transfer, they would be GPL-oriented. This would be the company that they would probably choose--and it worked.

That's a good point. Sometimes I think that we are scared off because we think, 'How can General Electric be interested in what we do?' But don't ever presume something like that, because you never know what they might be looking for; they may be looking for somebody that you have. A second question is: are your graduates generally receiving competitive salaries or starting wages to what four year college graduates receive?

Response:

They tend to receive less.

It seems to me that right there is an opportunity for you to shoehorn in and capture a market the big colleges can't touch.

Response:

Because they can do the job that they're hiring a lot of four year graduates for.

That's right. They can get your people for less. That's a crass way of putting it, but that's what you're doing--you're selling, you're trying to create or find your markets. The four year colleges are creating a training void that nobody's filling. You can fill that void, especially where you have some of these bigger industries with factories and offices right in your own town. For example, Seven-Eleven Stores filled a void created by the giant super markets. When the giant super markets came on the scene everybody thought that the Ma and Pa grocery store was going to go down the tube, and for awhile it looked like they were. But then somebody with a better idea, and a little bit of merchandising savvy came in with this Seven-Eleven concept, and they're doing very well in most places, because they are performing a service that these big giants can't do.

Response:

I wonder if we're making a mistake in one area we're operating on. For those companies that are already using community college graduates, I think we're doing well as far as personnel officers, because those are the people we interact with, once contact has been made. But as far as expanding our market, I would think we would want to influence company policy at a higher level.

Response:

That's a good question, an excellent point. The question was

brought up awhile ago--what do you do with a personnel man who is constantly transferring? Most of your professional employment agencies will completely ignore the personnel man because he's not a policy-making man.

Response:

Who hires employees? Many times the personnel manager is the go-between. We've done some special follow-up on it. We had a study on promotions that we've mailed to chief engineers, directors of nursing services, presidents of a company, plus the personnel manager, and at one time we sent a questionnaire and asked them to send it back to the personnel manager (both questionnaires) so we found out whether the system was working or not.

That's excellent. Some life insurance companies have picked up on this. A life insurance agent will look through the business columns of a newspaper and they'll see where a man has been promoted, and so what they'll do is they'll get in touch with that man because a promotion usually means an increase in pay, it may mean an increase in responsibility, and they can then afford to provide the insurance coverage for their family that maybe they couldn't in their earlier position. So all of a sudden, you've got three thousand insurance companies descending on one guy whose name and picture appeared in the paper. But what a lot of the smarter ones are doing is, they're by-passing that guy, and they're finding out who took his place, because his name isn't in there. So they will call the company and find out who replaced John Henry who was just promoted to vice-president (who's filling his seat?), and they'll go after him. So that's just exactly what you're

talking about. Maybe your personnel director in most cases isn't the man you want to make your impression on. You don't want to ignore him, but also contact those in decision-making positions.

Response:

How well would some of these mailing outfits be able to zero in on chief executives for us? And of course another thing too is that in the Puget Sound Area we have a regional placement effort whereby we could collectively contact employers.

That's a good point too. Collective efforts many times are something you should look into for mailing projects.

Response:

There is one other source of leads that we frequently overlook. Every metropolitan area generally has its small trade newspapers. These papers daily print lists of the new businesses, putting the names of personnel, the addresses of the firm, and what they produce. I contacted one of these papers and subscribed to it to get to the people we know are going to need help. This gives you a tailor-made lead, because any new business needs new personnel.

Response:

Another possibility for contacts is advisory groups. Our institution is an old, established school. We have a list of 1100 people in industry who have been or who are currently members of advisory committees for the college. I'm sending them a mailing in which I'm including a proposed letter about our college which they can use if they want to, or write their own if they want to, asking them to send them to ten or fifteen others of their business associates, or people that they think may not know about our institution. It

puts it on them to spread it around the area among their own trades; and I think coming from them, and signed by them ("I'm a member of the advisory committee of this college, and I urge you to turn to that")may carry more weight than if it came from us.

Yes, that's good. That's a technique that we use all the time, and I'm glad that you brought that up. Sometimes you can accomplish more by using third parties or other influential people to sign your letters for you, or have letters come from their offices for special purposes. Instead of coming from you, it could come from somebody else that might be interested. Let's say that you have a company, an employer, who has been particularly satisfied with the graduates that they have gotten from your college. It would be very much in line to go to the president of that company and ask him if he would write a letter expressing his satisfaction with your services, and the quality of graduates that they have employed from your institution. Then you can take that letter, and you can mail it out to other employers, or mail several of them in a little kit form, along with the brochure, a personal letter, a selection of these testimonial letters about your services. There's another thing that you ought not to overlook in direct mail technique, and that is the return postcard. If you can think of something that you want them to write you back about, and put in an enclosed post card, self-addressed and stamped, then in your letter ask something like: "I would like to know if you received such and such;" or, "Would you like to be placed on the mailing list;" or, "Would you like to receive our list of graduates every quarter;" or,"Would you like to receive our catalogue?" Then put down his name and address, his company, his title, and a place to request that information. That's one way of keeping your mailing list

current, because mailing lists will change. One of the biggest jobs that I would imagine you have is keeping your mailing list current. It's a big job for businesses who do a lot of direct mail. It's also an important way of establishing that your letters are being read--to create reasons for them to write to you.

Response:

> Another wrinkle along the same line is to try to get a company to include you in a copy of a newspaper ad. Bethlehem Steel or some major company says,"We hire community college graduates in machine technology." It not only advertised the company, but it went on and listed what these graduates could do in their company. I thought it was a fantastic idea, and I suspect that the company paid a large proportion of the cost of that ad.

That's another good way that you can get companies to help you subsidize your placement program. Now what I would do if I saw an ad like that, if it was pertaining to you, I'd clip it out and put a little letter on it and send it to the business with some information about yourself. I would say, "Please put us on your list of colleges to visit," and then I'd write a real enticing letter as to why they should. It would be a good way to establish communication. It seems to me that you're going to have to do a lot of these little things in order to create this special reputation for yourself. Let me just mention a few things that I don't know whether you're in a position to take advantage of. In the area of audio-visual facilities, I know that some businesses and colleges are doing things that are kind of exciting. For example, a lot of companies make voice recordings, and they'll send them around to the universities. These are taped voice recordings that students can play and listen to the company's message. Most companies aren't just sitting back waiting for graduates to

apply. Their situation is very competitive for the top graduates, so they're very aggressive. They are preparing rather sophisticated audio-visual devices to help them attract these college graduates. The video-cassette is one that is growing in acceptance and use. The company will send a 16 millimeter film or a tape of some kind, and then the college can convert it to video-cassette, and then they just plug it into the slot, and the students sit there and watch it like a television set. This is in the area not only of offering services to the employer, but it is also offering services to the student, so the student can come in and learn about these companies and what they have to offer. If you can offer some real, tangible, unusual, unique services to the students, you'll enhance your office, and you'll enhance your ability to do your job. Certain employers will respond to this kind of a program. Film strips and slides are other things that some companies have available.

One university is getting into the area of helping students to cold-canvass for jobs, because they have found, of course, that not all graduates are able to find jobs. There isn't that much recruiting at present. Then it becomes the responsibility of the graduate to get out and make cold calls. But this university doesn't want the employers to know that they are counseling these students to do this, because they want to maintain the idea, their reputation, that theirs is a very high level placement service, and they don't want to give the impression that their graduates aren't being sought after right down to the C-student. So they have a very sophisticated program to teach these students how to present themselves before a prospective employer on a cold call basis--canvassing.

Another placement director indicated to me that when recruiting employers come to campus, they really give them the red carpet service.

I don't know how far you can go with this, but they of course take them out to the airport, and drive them in, and introduce them to the key members of the administration, have a luncheon for them, then take them out in the evening at a restaurant. Then after they've done their recruiting, and go back to their industry or their business, the college will follow-up with a letter and thank them for coming, saying, "We certainly enjoyed having you, and it will be a pleasure to see you again next time. In the meantime, may we remind you that we have these services that are available to you at any time. Don't wait until the formality of another recruitment visit to contact us; we have such and such and such that are available to you on a continuing basis." These colleges have attractive display racks in their offices for literature that companies all put out about themselves, so the students can come in and pick up this material. These are some of the things you can do: the display of company literature; the audio-visual aids; the slide-sound presentation; the video-cassette; the voice recording; all of these things that can keep students in your office and make it a focus of attention.

Response:

I wonder if you would perform an autopsy on the PR things that we've had in our college program. We have taken a page right out of your book, and published a spread in our papers about our program and its benefits for the employer. That's where we got into trouble. The college paid for the ad, so as a public service, the TV stations gave us about $6000 worth of space, time, etc. One of the boo-boos that I think was made, was that this was not listed as a public service, and it got feedback. The backlash got so bad so quick from the

community. The reaction was, here you are screaming you don't have enough money for lathes, and teachers' salaries, and then you spend all this money on an advertising campaign to tell the world how great you are--that's it in a nutshell. We cancelled the thing after we'd spent about $1000 of the $2000. Now where did we go wrong on it?

You just mentioned it. You'd need to sit down and look at the whole thing, but as you said, one of the things that made it a cardinal mistake, was that you did not label it as a public service. This is a problem we run into all the time with associations. I represent two associations, and they are always crying to their members for funds to operate on, and they just don't dare spend anything on advertising for that very reason, because people say, "If you've got money to spend on advertising, I'm not going to pay you my dues next year because....." One way of course is to label it as a public service.

Response:

All you need is one TV spot, and they think you're opening a whole multi-million dollar campaign.

Well, I don't know. That comes under the category of selling the need and value of advertising, and it sounds like in your town you could go to the radio and television and newspaper people and you could explain your dilemma to them, and ask them for support in educating the public as to how an advertising program will benefit the college and the community, why there are certain kinds of benefits that come from that type of a communication that we aren't going to get in any other way. Another way would be to go to your key community leaders in special

sessions or special meetings, and make a presentation to them, explaining why you're doing this.

Response:

I think that's where the idea came from. The key community leaders came up with the idea of advertising to show some successes.

Who was doing the objecting, then?

Response:

That guy in the street who's p /ing the taxes.

How many of them?

Response:

Like yesterday the budget went down again. Our placement budget is now down $6578, something like that. We went out once before and failed, came out again and failed, and so now we go back to the drawing boards and.....

Well, if you got matching funds before, what would be the chance of not having to spend any money yourself, of going to the media and asking them to contribute as a public service? Then you could say it's totally public service.

This thing was so bad--phones ringing, letters to the editor. It happened so fast that we even asked them not to do it as a public service.

What were you saying in your advertising?

There was a picture of a student--here's a young man or woman--what they had learned at our community college and the job they now hai--kind of a boost for the local economy.

This was a campaign that was being run to get votes for a levy?

Oh no, this was just a kind of PR type of thing--here's what we have

done--a report to the community.

Response:

I made this comment to your staff the other day. I saw some of those advertisements and showed one to one of the guys in our community, a body and fender man, and I think his response is typical. The specific ad was about a student who had graduated from this community college and was now a body and fender man, and the quality of his shop was so great, that normally his bids were higher than the rest of the body and fender people around the area. Even at that, many people would specify they wanted their car fixed there, because of the quality workmanship of this guy. But the response of the man to whom I showed the ad was, "Boy, look at the advertising that guy gets for free from this community college and all the rest of the guys get none." This is one of the things that I would mention in your advertisement campaign.

Yes, that would be a problem. That could cause kind of an uproar. Is that the kind of complaint you were getting, people saying that this guy's getting free advertising?

That was one thing. The major complaint, as I mentioned before was, "If you've got that kind of money, why should we be hassling dollars for your college?"

Perhaps the model presented by the Seattle Public Schools would be appropriate here. When it comes money time, the Seattle Public Schools put out an advertising program to get people to get out and vote for their schools. But it is clearly marked as being monies from non-public sources, that the campaign is being conducted by the Committee for Support

of the Seattle Public Schools. So it sounds like it's a private group that's spending their money, and it is. It's a citizen's group that raises this money to support the schools. It sounds to me like you have two problems. One which you mentioned, is that if you mention a company by name, and say that they are getting more business even though they're charging higher prices, because they're producing better quality, that's just an outright commercial endorsement. That would be enough to cause a lot of uproar in the business community. The second which you also mentioned is that when you are talking about public or community services, people expect them to be non-profit. If you've got money to spend on commercial advertising, people just can't make the adjustment between a non-profit and a profit-oriented business. If it were a private school, you probably wouldn't have any problem in doing it, but because it is a public supported school, there is a lack of understanding about what you're trying to do and what advertising is all about. I think the better way to do a report to the community would be through a public relations promotion instead of an advertising program, because a public relations program is mostly supported by free offerings, such as space in a newspaper or time on radio-television, in the form of news feature stories, television and radio features, documentaries, and this type of thing. You can approach the newspaper, radio, and television stations with the idea in mind that you would appreciate this, as a public supported institution. Since it is the taxpayers' money that is paying for it, you can't spend any money, but it would be to their interest, as well as that of the community, for them to know about their community college so they can support it. Appeal to them on a public service basis. Change your promotion from an advertising program to a

public relations program.

Response:

I'm sure you're well aware of the problems that come up from overselling. As a result of my own experience, I've spent a lot of time conducting on-campus recruiting, and in the process I have recruited some companies for two or three years running. However, these companies can't get graduates to accept employment with them. Some of them are from the East Coast. So there all my recruiting work has gone down the drain, because they can't attract our graduates. Our graduates don't want to go to the East Coast. So you can oversell. Well, that's a good point. You're going to have to handle those situations individually. I would write back to those companies that have become discouraged, and indicate the reasons. "Our graduates, unfortunately, want to stay out on the West Coast. We're sorry about this, but we obviously don't have any control over it. However, there are graduates who would be happy to accept employment on the East Coast. What we would like to do is call your attention to these people. We'll send you resumes or whatever you want about them, when they come along." So, you keep this communication open. Even though you've lost them as a recruiter, you can still keep them as a job opportunity.

Response:

That's right. And they do invite us to do that. I have run through these and met the recruiter and the student, and now I'm being more selective in taking those companies that the students are more interested in.

Response:

We've had a problem at our school with the fact that we can't spend

any money on advertising. We have certain programs there which are really great, but they are put in jeopardy because of lack of students. There would be a conflict of interest on the part of the newspapers if they gave us free public relations exposure, because there are private schools that are spending lots of money advertising the same programs, for which they charge large amounts of money, but which we are offering to students tuition-free. If they were to publicize the fact that we offer these programs, they'd be cutting the ground right out from under the people who are paying them. I don't know how you get around a thing like that.

That's probably the toughest situation you can get into in this business, and it's very difficult to overcome, unless you can just go to the newspapers or your publications, lay it down on the table and say, "This is our problem. What would you suggest we do?" If I were a newspaper editor and you came to me, and I knew your situation--"We've got jobs, we've got a fabulous metallurgy program, but we can't get the students because they don't know about the program," then my ears, as an editor, would go up just like that, because here is a very good story, a good public interest story. I think any editor worth his salt would be interested in that story. If the private schools came to them and said, "Look, you gave these people something for nothing, so we expect you to do the same for us," I'd tell them, "This has nothing to do with that--this is a newsworthy story. I don't care how much money you're spending, how much money they're spending, this is news, this is good feature material, and I'm going to run it." I'd just make them back down, and I think they would. But I don't think I'm speaking just for myself as an editor, but I think my reaction is typical. I think if you went to them

with this approach you would be successful.

Response:

I've had three stories in our local newspaper in the last nine months by picking out for them an unusual job that we've built. Our PR woman is smart enough that every time anything of this nature appears in the paper, she lists it: jobs can be listed at the placement office; our telephone number; our extension; the hours; and we see a tremendous increase of employers calling in and placing jobs with us, as a result of these stories.

That's good. That's a good example of what I'm suggesting. Another important point is the care and feeding of newspaper people, press people, the media, or newspapers. After they have run a story for you, write them a letter and thank them. Don't ever let that go by without doing it. That's the best thing you can do.

Response:

What could we project as far as costs? What would an advertising agency's services be worth?

That's really a tough one, because agency services and costs vary very widely, depending on the type of advertising agency. It depends upon whether they're full service or part service, if they're specialists, or if they're a large agency, small, or medium-sized. I think that if you want to look into this, I would go to a good, small, compact agency office. The overhead requirements of these larger agencies is so great, that a lot of them won't even talk to you unless you spend at least $25,000 a year in advertising. But you can go to smaller agencies who are very good, and you can get them to work with you. I would imagine most of their service would just be in counseling and advice, but maybe

you want more than that. I would say that you are probably going to have to be willing to spend somewhere around a minimum of $5000 a year with them.

Response:

That's not unrealistic, because many of us have some sort of public relations going on within our organizations, a lot of people involved, and $25,000 hardly pays the salary of the guy who's heading it up.

Response:

Here in the Puget Sound area, we've just formed a consortium, and have funds to operate that small staff with ten colleges. It would be conceivable with that kind of emphasis, covering about 50,000 students, and 10 campuses, we could afford a $5000 campaign. I don't know whether we can legally afford it, as we have to go back to the State to spend state dollars for this kind of campaign, but it seems to me, in a concerted kind of effort, we're in a better position to do it than are individual campuses.

Yes, that's a good point. I was going to bring that up just before you did--where you can get two or more colleges together and you can cooperate on a program. That's done often in business. The purpose of an association of any kind is for promotional and public relations--that's 90% of the reason that any association exists. They do it so they do spread out the costs and share them, if they can't afford it individually. If legally you can afford the services of an agency, I certainly would do it, because they can really help you.

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